



**CollegeBoard**

Advanced Placement  
Program

# AP<sup>®</sup> Spanish Language

2006–2007

Professional Development  
Workshop Materials

**Special Focus:  
Integrating Skills Using  
Authentic Materials**

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**Important Note:** The following set of materials is organized around a particular theme, or “special focus,” that reflects important topics in the AP Spanish Language course. The materials are intended to provide teachers with resources and classroom ideas relating to these topics. The special focus, as well as the specific content of the materials, cannot and should not be taken as an indication that a particular topic will appear on the AP Exam.



### Introducción

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El propósito de este tomo es proporcionar ayuda y apoyo a los profesores de AP Lengua Española al iniciar la preparación para la nueva versión del Examen de AP, que se ofrecerá a sus alumnos en mayo de 2007. La actualización del examen refleja el propósito del College Board de que el Programa de AP se alinee todo lo posible con la realidad de las clases universitarias, para lo cual lleva a cabo periódicamente los estudios y encuestas que a veces resultan en modificaciones en el contenido y formato del examen. El Examen de AP de 2007 representa la culminación de un largo y muy cuidadoso proceso que empezó hace unos cinco años.

De la lectura de los distintos capítulos, todos ellos preparados por profesores de nivel secundario y universitario, se desprenden algunas enseñanzas importantes para el profesor de AP:

- La preparación para el examen empieza desde la primera clase del primer año de español. No se trata sólo de una clase de AP sino de todo un programa de español con metas, contenidos y métodos apropiados para cada nivel pero con unos propósitos globales en los que estén implicados los profesores de todos los niveles.
- La integración de las destrezas, que es una novedad en el examen, se puede y se debe practicar en todos los niveles de aprendizaje de la lengua.
- La lectura de distintas clases de textos en todos los niveles de enseñanza es una de las claves de un buen programa de español.
- En las clases es importante emplear materiales auténticos porque son la mejor manera de reflejar la realidad de la lengua y a la vez presentar un fiel y legítimo contexto cultural.

Gracias a los cambios, el Examen de AP incorpora las ventajas y el fundamental significado para los programas de lengua de los *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*. Son especialmente valiosos los conceptos referidos a la comunicación interactiva, la habilidad de presentar las ideas por escrito y de forma oral y la integración de la cultura en el aprendizaje de la lengua.

Pienso que debemos emprender esta nueva etapa del Programa de AP Lengua con confianza e ilusión. Como destacan varios de los autores, se trata de actualizar y enriquecer nuestras clases con contenidos y métodos de probados resultados. Los

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artículos de este tomo ayudarán al lector a comprender el origen de los cambios, conocer sus detalles y examinar algunas técnicas y actividades que le serán útiles en sus clases.

### Referencia

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*. Lawrence, Kansas: Allen Press, Inc., 1999.

## **The 2007 AP Spanish Language Exam: Assessment for the Twenty-First Century**

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For many decades, the AP Spanish Language course has provided high school students with the opportunity to engage in course work comparable with that done in the college classroom at the fifth- or sixth-semester level. The AP Spanish Language Exam, as a standardized measure of these students' achievement, has allowed thousands of students to receive credit for their work at colleges and universities across the United States. By giving students the option of pursuing advanced work while in high school, the AP Program encourages more in-depth study over a long period. Studies show that students who begin a language early and continue for an extensive amount of time ultimately achieve greater proficiency than students who study languages for only a limited time. Thus the AP Spanish Language program, in enriching the high school experience, has helped thousands of students enter adult life with enhanced language skills and a greater capacity to build further upon these skills while in college.

The AP Spanish Language course has a long and successful history. Much has changed, however, in society and in education since the 1950s, when the first AP Spanish Exam was administered. In recent years, with the explosion of new technology, the pace of change has accelerated. The advent of the Internet, greater access to films through video and DVD, and the availability of cable and satellite television have all contributed to a world in which opportunities for students to engage directly with the Spanish language in its spoken and written forms have multiplied. In addition, demographic changes have made the Latino population the largest minority group in the United States, with a significant presence in most regions of the country. In short, students today are clearly learning Spanish in a context that is vastly changed from a decade or two ago.

The demographic trends and advances in technology that have changed the learning environment for students of AP Spanish motivated the AP Spanish Development Committee to consider changes in the exam. Additional impetus for reexamining the exam came from the field of second-language acquisition, where, increasingly, communicative competence was emphasized while the mastery of discrete grammar points, separated from context, had begun to be viewed less favorably. Instrumental in fueling revision were the guidelines regarding second-language acquisition developed

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under the leadership of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). These included not only the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* but also the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*, developed by ACTFL in collaboration with language-specific associations, including the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG), and the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP). These important tools provided orientation regarding levels of proficiency, sample tasks to be expected at various levels, and modes of communication to be developed.

The *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*, which Sheri Spaine Long (2005) of the University of Alabama at Birmingham terms the “professionally accepted norm,” also expanded the concept of foreign-language learning beyond the idea of literal comprehension to include the development of interactive communication, the ability to present ideas, and the integration of culture into the language-learning process. Long emphasizes the advantages of implementing the Standards. As she points out, “standards-based learning offers variety, balance and flexibility,” as well as meeting the needs of a diverse student population and encouraging teaching that focuses on various skills and goals rather than on just one skill or goal (156-57).

In 2002, the AP Spanish Development Committee embarked upon a review of the AP Spanish Language Exam to determine what changes might be necessary to bring the exam in line with the altered panorama of technology, language-learning theory, and demographics. The committee had just completed a successful revision of the AP Spanish Literature program and approached the revision of the language program with enthusiasm and confidence. Now, four years later, a new exam has taken shape that better reflects the reality of students in today’s world and the requirements they face as language learners.

Once the committee decided that changes to the AP Spanish Language Exam were desirable, its members began developing the new exam format, a process that involved many steps and took several years. Starting in 2002, the members of the committee (a representative group composed of AP Spanish teachers from public and private high schools from around the nation as well as college and university faculty members from various types of colleges and universities from different regions) began this process by conducting a review of current research in second-language acquisition (SLA). Additionally, the committee surveyed language departments in colleges and universities across the country to ensure that the expectations governing the new exam would match those in the college classes with which they were seeking comparability. The committee

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also convened a panel of experts in foreign-language pedagogy for a two-day meeting to discuss possible revisions to the exam. Finally, committee members sought input from other key sources, including the College Board's World Languages Academic Advisory Committee, AP and college/university teachers participating in the annual AP Spanish Language Reading and the AP Annual Conference, and AP teachers surveyed through the AP Central Web site.

As the process of considering changes unfolded, some general principles emerged that would guide the development of the new exam. First and foremost, the Development Committee agreed on the desirability of using authentic materials, whether these were selections from periodicals, film clips, visual stimuli, radio broadcasts, or listening passages taken from the Internet. A recent article by Helen Webb of the University of Pennsylvania summarizes the research that supports the validity of this decision. In the first of two examples mentioned by Webb, Carolyn Gascoigne discovered that students readily transfer reading strategies used in their first language to authentic texts in a second language. In the second example, Dolly Jesusita Young found that students of a second language actually comprehend authentic texts better than materials simplified expressly for them (2005, 88.3: 545). The committee also recognized that the use of authentic materials would align language learning in AP Spanish with the emphasis that the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* gives to culture. According to the Standards, as Webb points out, "the true content of the foreign language course is not the grammar and the vocabulary of the language but the cultures expressed through that language" (545). The Development Committee endorsed the idea of "cultures" as a component of the AP Spanish Language course and of the new exam. By "cultures," we understand not a "laundry list" of factoids but rather an awareness of how different cultures' perspectives affect how people live and what they produce. Thus students should come to understand how ways of thinking in specific cultures are embodied in their literature, songs, and movies and in countless other cultural practices and artifacts. In addition, the study of the Spanish language includes acquiring an appreciation for different contexts in which the language is used, whether based on geography or on different uses of language within a given culture. As part of their study, then, students should learn to appreciate how language is used differently in formal and informal settings and in different regions.

In keeping with the Standards, the committee determined to consider the study of language as including a variety of modes of communication. The new exam would need to cover not just the one-way "interpretive mode" of reading and listening but also two other main modes of communication, which the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*

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terms “interpersonal” and “presentational,” respectively. Incorporating these modes into the classroom means that students should practice using two-way communication, as in spontaneous dialogues or even “instant messaging.” They should also practice making presentations, either orally or in writing, that involve prior preparation, revisions, and rehearsal. The Development Committee, in formulating the new exam, reasoned that because the Standards-based classroom focuses on all three of these modes, the AP Exam should also reflect and examine all of them to the extent possible.

The Development Committee, in formulating revisions to the exam, also took into consideration recent theoretical literature and information on best practices in language testing. The committee recognized the importance of incorporating evidence-based design into the creation of the new exam. This means that the exam should be able to provide concrete evidence to support the claims about mastery made by an AP grade of 3, 4, or 5. The following summary of the claims and evidence that the new AP Spanish Language Exam seeks to embody were recently posted on AP Central ([apcentral.collegeboard.com/spanlang](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/spanlang)).

### Claims<sup>1</sup>

The student who receives an AP grade of 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Spanish Language Exam has mastered—to a degree commensurate with the AP grade—the skills and knowledge required to receive credit for an advanced level (fifth- and sixth-semester or the equivalent) college/university Spanish language course.

- The student has strong communicative ability in Spanish in interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive modes.
- The student has a strong command of Spanish linguistic skills (including accuracy and fluency) that support communicative ability.
- The student comprehends Spanish intended for native speakers in a variety of settings, types of discourse, topics, styles, registers, and broad regional variations.
- The student produces Spanish comprehensible to native speakers in a variety of settings, types of discourse, topics, and registers.
- The student acquires information from authentic sources in Spanish.
- The student is aware of some cultural perspectives of Spanish-speaking peoples.

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<sup>1</sup> Claims “are statements we’d like to make about what students know, can do, or have accomplished” (Mislevy, Steinberg, and Almond, 2002).

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### Evidence<sup>2</sup>

The AP Spanish Language student can:

- Identify and summarize the main points and significant details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a spoken source, such as a broadcast news report or a lecture, on an academic or cultural topic related to the Spanish-speaking world.
- Identify and summarize the main points and significant details and predict outcomes from an everyday conversation on a familiar topic, a dialogue from a film or other broadcast media, or an interview on a social or cultural topic related to the Spanish-speaking world.
- Identify and summarize main points and important details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a written text, such as a newspaper or magazine article or a contemporary literary excerpt.
- Write a cohesive and coherent analytical or persuasive essay in reaction to a text or on a personal, academic, cultural, or social issue, with control of grammar and syntax.
- Describe, narrate, and present information and/or persuasive arguments on general topics with grammatical control and good pronunciation in an oral presentation of two or three minutes.
- Use information from sources provided to present a synthesis and express an opinion.
- Recognize cultural elements implicit in oral and written texts.
- Interpret linguistic cues to infer social relationships.
- Communicate via formal and informal written correspondence.
- Initiate, maintain, and close a conversation on a familiar topic.
- Formulate questions to seek clarification or additional information.
- Use language that is semantically and grammatically accurate according to a given context.

In addition to theoretical demands regarding validity, the committee had certain practical considerations in mind in designing the exam. For the sake of efficiency, committee members believed efforts should be made to avoid evaluating the same skill in different parts of the exam. Although the new exam will be introduced in 2007, the committee was able to incorporate this particular principle into the exam in 2005 through the elimination

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<sup>2</sup> Evidence comprises observable work products, which can be evaluated to substantiate intended claims (Mislevy, Almond, and Lukas, 2003).

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of the cloze and error-recognition passages, which evaluated skills examined elsewhere in the exam.

The committee took another step to ensure a successful outcome of the revision process when in 2004 and 2005 they successfully field-tested tasks developed for use in the new exam in over 60 AP Spanish Language classes and in Spanish classes at six institutions of higher learning. The field test confirmed the principles the Development Committee was striving to implement and gave committee members valuable information as they began to develop the final version of the revised exam.

Each of the various tasks included on the new AP Spanish Language Exam is designed to elicit specific evidence to support the claims made by the score the student receives. The exam is divided into two main parts: multiple-choice and free-response, each worth 50 percent of the student's overall AP score. The multiple-choice section evaluates the interpretation of aural and written material—that is, listening and reading comprehension. Listening comprehension is evaluated both through brief dialogues and narrations and through longer selections. These listening passages range from informal conversations to film dialogues to presentations on academic and cultural topics. Students are asked to show comprehension by identifying and summarizing both main points and significant details. They are also expected to show that they can use linguistic clues present in these selections to make inferences about cultural elements and social relationships.

The reading comprehension section, like the listening section, uses multiple-choice questions to examine students' comprehension of selections from such sources as newspapers, magazines, and contemporary literature. As with the listening section, students are asked to demonstrate that they can identify and summarize main points and significant details. Once again, they must make inferences regarding cultural elements implied in the selections as well as about social relationships implied in the texts.

In the second half of the exam, the free-response portion, students continue to be asked to identify main points and significant details, to recognize cultural elements implicit in the selections, and to make inferences about social relationships implied. In this portion, however, they have the opportunity to demonstrate use of all three modes of communication identified by the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. In addition, they are asked to engage in communication that is both formal and informal. This part of the exam also allows students to demonstrate their command of linguistic skills that support communication, including accuracy and fluency.

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The free-response half of the exam contains six different types of tasks. The first three—paragraph completion with root words, paragraph completion without root words, and informal writing—are designed to take a total of only 25 minutes. These tasks are followed by a more sustained writing task designed to take approximately 55 minutes. This latter section is a formal writing assignment that integrates reading, writing, and listening skills. Instead of a single written prompt, as in the composition section of the old AP Spanish Exam, here students must apply listening and reading skills to the task of comprehending authentic materials. They are asked to bring the different sources together into an analytical or persuasive essay that exemplifies the formal presentational mode of writing. The sources students use in this part of the exam deal with personal, cultural, academic, or social issues.

The last two tasks on the free-response portion of the new exam allow the student to demonstrate speaking skills in interpersonal and presentational modes. First, students are asked to demonstrate informal speaking by participating in a conversational role play. Student participation in this simulated conversation is facilitated and shaped by specific contextual clues and by the guidance provided by an outline. In addition to recognizing the cultural elements implicit in the recorded texts and making inferences about the social relationships implied, as in all tasks on the exam, students are asked to show that they can converse on a familiar topic, ask questions, and seek clarification. This portion of the exam also allows for the accuracy and fluency of students' oral language usage to be assessed.

In the final task on the exam, the formal oral presentation, students are asked to integrate listening, reading, and speaking skills. This task elicits similar types of evidence as the others but resembles the formal writing task in that students are asked to present information and/or argue a point of view synthesizing information from different types of sources. Here, of course, they present their answers orally instead of in writing.

As the date for implementation of the new exam approaches, AP Spanish teachers, both new and experienced, are eager to understand the format of the new exam and the best ways to prepare students. The College Board is committed to ongoing efforts to disseminate information and to participate in the training of teachers through workshops, conference sessions, publications, and the Web. Of particular interest is the AP Central Web site, where a growing collection of Web pages on the new exam has been made available to teachers. These pages include student samples from the field test, scoring commentaries, and task samples with examples of acceptable responses. See [apcentral.collegeboard.com/members/article/1,3046,151-165-0-50015,00.html](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/members/article/1,3046,151-165-0-50015,00.html).

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The AP Spanish Development Committee believes that the new AP Spanish Language Exam, because it reflects accepted professional norms in second-language education, will serve our students well. As they adjust to the new exam, teachers of AP Spanish Language are encouraged to avail themselves of the many resources that have been designed to inform them about changes and to help them plan activities that will prepare their students for success on the exam.

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### **Planning for Success: Designing and Implementing Meaningful Lessons to Target the Written and Oral Free-Response Tasks**

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This article discusses teaching strategies related to four new exam tasks: the formal and informal writing tasks and the formal and informal speaking tasks. Taken together, these tasks represent nearly all of the free-response section of the AP Exam and nearly half of the entire exam. Furthermore, these four tasks include the most significant changes to the examination format that will take effect beginning with the 2007 exam. Given the importance of the tasks and the fact that they are fundamentally different from the tasks that they are replacing, it is essential to address them directly and appropriately. Fortunately for the AP teacher and for the AP student, these tasks are much more congruent with teaching strategies and language skills currently accepted in the profession, as well as skills necessary for success in the academic and professional world.

This article has two parts: Part I is an introduction and presents a detailed description of the new tasks by providing an annotated version of the published task descriptions. Part II offers guidance on how to create units (with subsumed lessons) to prepare students for these tasks, including a detailed description of a sample unit with up to seven lessons to prepare students for each of the tasks. Part II concludes by offering suggestions for creating other thematic units.

#### **I. The New Free-Response Speaking and Writing Tasks**

AP teachers should be highly encouraged to make use of the ever-expanding array of materials available on AP Central ([apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com)); the following section is an annotation of some of the descriptive materials available on the new exam tasks. Throughout this section of this article, text quoted from AP Central is indented in block form.

#### **Formal Writing Task (an Integrated Skills Task)**

##### **Description**

[The formal writing task will] reflect an integration of the following skills: listening, reading, and writing (an example of the interpretive and presentational mode). Students will be required to read two documents,

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listen to a related source/recording, and respond to a written prompt. All sources, both written and aural, will be authentic—either in their original format or re-recorded. Students will be encouraged to make reference to and cite all of the sources. Students will have 7 minutes to read the printed sources and then will listen to a stimulus of approximately 3 minutes. After listening to the prompt, students will have 5 minutes to plan their responses and 40 minutes to write their essays. The total time allotted for this section will be approximately 55 minutes.

Unlike AP Exam formats up to and including the 2006 exam, in which students completed writing tasks based exclusively on very brief written stimuli, the new exam challenges students to gather information from written and spoken sources, process that information, and create a writing sample based on information that they have interpreted from the provided sources. Students are also given the chance to synthesize what they have read and heard in the written and spoken sources in a meaningful way in constructing their response. To be successful, students should generally be able to read and comprehend the significant points and overall meaning of written Spanish texts at a rate of at least 90 words per minute, understand and process spoken Spanish at a normal rate of speech, and retain and make use of the information gathered.

**Evidence** supporting claims made about the successful AP student (see AP Central for details) is as follows:

The AP Spanish Language student can:

- Write a cohesive and coherent analytical or persuasive essay in reaction to a text or on a personal, academic, cultural, or social issue, with control of grammar and syntax

In the past, students were asked to demonstrate their writing skills in relative isolation by writing an essay in response to a canned topic; the new exam format still gives students chances to demonstrate their writing skills, but it expands the task in two ways: first, the new task requires that students also comprehend written and spoken Spanish intended for a general audience; second, to be successful, students must be able to synthesize and apply information gathered from the sources.

- Use information from sources provided to present a synthesis and express an opinion

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There is no “correct” or “incorrect” answer to the question that prompts the writing task, but students should be able to comprehend each of the sources—spoken and written—along with their relevance to the question and to each other. Sources should be cited in the essay.

- Recognize cultural elements implicit in oral and written texts.

Students will learn that text intended for native speakers often contains cultural information that may not be immediately transparent; thus “la Casa Rosada dijo,” “Moncloa dijo,” or “el portavoz de Los Pinos dijo” may not make any sense without some recognition that they are analogous to “the White House said” or “10 Downing Street said.” While of course it is not essential (or even possible) for students to understand all of the cultural elements that may be present, it is important for them to recognize that they will not always be able to parse language in a literal manner nor will all meanings be the same for all readers or listeners.

- Interpret linguistic cues to infer social relationships.

They will be able to notice and react to, for example, shifts in register (such as from *tú* to *usted*).

- Use language that is semantically and grammatically accurate according to a given context.

Students should be able to demonstrate a richness and accuracy of vocabulary as well as be able to construct grammatically accurate language at the phrase, sentence, paragraph, and discourse levels.

- Identify and summarize main points and important details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a written text, such as a newspaper or magazine article or a contemporary literary excerpt.
- Identify and summarize the main points and significant details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a spoken source, such as a broadcast news report or a lecture, on an academic or cultural topic related to the Spanish-speaking world.

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### Formal Oral Presentation Task (an Integrated Skills Task)

#### Description

The second part of the speaking section will be an example of the interpretive and presentational modes. It integrates three skills: reading, listening, and speaking. Students need to give an oral presentation in a formal or academic setting. They will be asked to read one document and listen to a recording, after which they will have two minutes to prepare for the presentation and two minutes to answer the question related to the sources. Students will be encouraged to make reference to and cite all sources.

In the old exam format, the picture sequence was a descriptive narrative that students would develop after seeing a visual prompt (a series of six pictures). In the new exam format, the task requires students to comprehend written and spoken selections and create a response that synthesizes information gathered from the listening and reading prompts in their answer. Students must also demonstrate a capacity for producing spoken Spanish with vocabulary and structures appropriate for a formal oral presentation.

#### Evidence

The AP Spanish Language student can:

- Describe, narrate, and present information and/or persuasive arguments on general topics with grammatical control and good pronunciation in an oral presentation of two or three minutes.

In the previous exam format, students demonstrated their spoken language ability by responding to a series of patterned questions and by describing a series of pictures that represented a story. As is the case with the changes to the written portion of the exam, students now give speech samples of approximately the same length as in previous exam formats but in a much more relevant context, in addition to drawing on their written comprehension and listening comprehension abilities.

- Use information from sources provided to present a synthesis and express an opinion.

As with the written task, students should be able to comprehend each of the sources—spoken and written—along with their relevance to the question and to each other.

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Sources should be cited or otherwise appropriately referred to in the oral presentation.

- Recognize cultural elements implicit in oral and written texts.

Students should be able to be aware of cultural differences that may be inherent in the texts.

- Interpret linguistic cues to infer social relationships.

Students should be aware of the differences in social relationships that may be alluded to with linguistic or pragmatic cues.

- Identify and summarize main points and important details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a written text, such as a newspaper or magazine article or a contemporary literary excerpt.
- Identify and summarize the main points and significant details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a spoken source, such as a broadcast news report or a lecture, on an academic or cultural topic related to the Spanish-speaking world.
- Use language that is semantically and grammatically accurate according to a given context.

The formal oral presentation should take into account that the setting is, in fact, a formal one. Sentence and paragraph structure, along with discourse style, should be appropriate for an academic presentation.

In sum, the formal writing and formal speaking tasks in the new exam format require students to do with the language precisely what the language is used for—as a tool for communication, including gathering, processing, and sharing information in a variety of settings.

### Informal Writing

The third part of the writing section will be an informal writing task. Students will have 10 minutes to read a prompt and write their responses. Examples may include writing an email message, a letter, a journal entry, or a postcard.

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In this task, students are given an item that will demonstrate their ability to communicate in an informal setting. They are encouraged to use lexical items and linguistic structures appropriate for this type of writing, including an appropriate introduction and closing, good organization and structure, and accurately chosen vocabulary and grammar. They should also be able to accurately indicate differences in register (for example, appropriate use of *tú* and *usted*) as well as be precise in their selection of words, salutations, and other expressions.

### Informal Speaking

The first part of the speaking section will include a task that measures speaking skills in an informal setting. There will be a conversation role-play situation (an example of the interpersonal mode). Students will be asked to interact with a recorded conversation. There will be five or six opportunities for the students to answer. Each response will be 20 seconds in length. Students will have time to read an outline of the simulated conversation and the instructions before participating in the simulated conversation.

This section replaces the directed responses of previous exams. This change makes the simulated conversation considerably more contextualized (it is far more representative of a “real life” communicative exchange than the directed responses). To be successful at this task, the AP student should be able to initiate, maintain, and conclude a conversation on a variety of topics of general interest, properly form and appropriately pose questions to request information, and identify and respond to social and cultural cues in a conversation. Additionally, the student should have a range of vocabulary and grammatical accuracy that allows the message to be delivered with an ease of expression and naturalness.

## II. Sample Unit: Environmental Issues in the Spanish-Speaking World

This sample unit consists of a series of semiautonomous lessons that relate to the study of environmentally sensitive areas in the Spanish-speaking world. The lessons that are described here can be used as-is, or they can be shortened or extended as the teacher deems appropriate. Used in their entirety, they will likely occupy several weeks to a month of instruction in an AP class. This unit can overlap other instruction (for example, it can occupy the last half of a class period or can be given on alternating class days). The primary goal of this lesson is for students to practice formal academic writing and speaking in Spanish based on material from spoken and written sources.

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Students will need Internet access (either as an intact class or by individual or small group visits to the library or computer lab).

### **A Word on Internet Access and Availability**

Although Internet access is a prerequisite to the successful completion of these activities (and is an invaluable tool for gathering a wide range of authentic written and spoken materials in Spanish), it is recognized that Internet access and availability varies widely among schools. Availability and access can range from the rather commonplace scenario in which there is no access at all in the classroom, thus necessitating a visit to a school library or lab, to the not-so-common scenario of a fully “wired” classroom, perhaps with each student having access to a laptop with a wireless Internet connection along with a data projector for the teacher’s machine. Since each AP teacher will have a different situation, adapting to the resources at hand (provided they are minimally adequate—more on that two paragraphs below) is a matter of finding the best way to collect and disseminate the language material that is available.

Unless the language teacher happens to have a rich variety of sources of spoken and written Spanish from around the Spanish-speaking world, the emphasis on a rich variety of authentic sources in the new exam format has made some kind of Internet access for the students and teacher rather more of a necessity than a luxury. Although it is not always practical (or even desirable) to have this access in the classroom (so don’t feel bad if you don’t have 30 networked workstations in your room), it’s simply important for students to have a place at school (the library, for example) where they can research authentic materials, just as the teacher must similarly have a place in the workspace where successful AP Spanish activities can be planned and prepared. Lest there be any worry about whether AP Spanish Language students are up to the task of finding their own materials, it should be noted that the AP Spanish Language course is a college-level course, and one of the essential skills that students must have to successfully do college-level work is the ability to conduct their own research and gather information for comprehension and use; this point is also made in the article “Developing and Integrating Skills at Different Levels” in these materials. Even if the AP students need a crash course in research and information competence, that would not be a waste of time as it is such a valuable skill; furthermore, it can even be done in Spanish. For a tutorial on gathering information on the Internet, see the following site from Chile: [www-dev.puc.cl/sw\\_educ/gnosis/H/gnosish4.htm](http://www-dev.puc.cl/sw_educ/gnosis/H/gnosish4.htm).

Finally, if a teacher is in a situation in which the lack of availability of Internet access interferes with student learning, it may be necessary to remind school administrators of

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the upcoming AP Course Audit in which they will be required to sign off in several places indicating that the school provides the necessary resources and tools for successful conduct of the course (see [apcentral.collegeboard.com/repository/spanlang\\_ca\\_46395.pdf](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/repository/spanlang_ca_46395.pdf) for a draft version of the course audit form; to learn more about the course audit procedure, follow the links in the “AP Course Audit” box on the AP Spanish Language Course Home Page on AP Central).

### Lesson 1: Building Vocabulary

#### Objective

Students increase their knowledge of key vocabulary terms in Spanish related to the study of the environment. This lesson is a useful (but not obligatory) precursor to the lessons that follow.

#### Procedure

In this lesson, a glossary of key terms in Spanish will be created and practiced. Definitions should be clear and concise, as some of the terms may be new to students even in their native language. One strategy for compiling a glossary of terms is to have students come up with their own set of terms that they will be responsible for (this can be expedited by having the teacher complete this step). To create a glossary, students select a certain number of terms from among the several available lists on the topic, such as the glossary that accompanies an online environmental studies textbook published in Spain, available at [www.esi.unav.es/asignaturas/ecologia/Hipertexto/00General/Glosario.html](http://www.esi.unav.es/asignaturas/ecologia/Hipertexto/00General/Glosario.html), or by combining terms with another useful topical glossary from Colombia, found at [www.lopaisa.com/glosario.html](http://www.lopaisa.com/glosario.html).

Once the list of terms is determined and students have had an appropriate amount of time to become familiar with them, they should be practiced in a variety of ways, including the traditional vocabulary games, such as the “flyswatter” game (words are written on the board, the teacher or a student reads the definition in Spanish aloud, the first contestant to “swat” the correct matching word earns a point) and a Jeopardy®-type game (definitions with different point values are written on a transparency and then revealed; the first contestant to provide the matching word earns points). After an appropriate familiarization period has elapsed, students should be able to demonstrate that they can use the terms in meaningful, communicative contexts.

### Lesson 2: Activating Students' Prior Schema

#### Objective

Students engage in informal oral and written communication related to the topic area in the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes. This lesson specifically targets the informal speaking and informal writing tasks. Upon completing the lesson, students will have written an informal description of a past experience, read descriptions written by other students, interviewed other students about the topic, and written an informal letter offering advice.

#### Procedure

In Spanish, on a note card containing no identifying personal information, students write a brief description of a previous experience of their own at a natural area (for example, a visit to a state or national park, a camping trip, even time spent at a city park if they're desperate). The note cards are collected by the teacher, shuffled, and redistributed at random. Students are tasked with finding out who wrote the note card they received; to do so, all students in the class stand and circulate around the room, interviewing each other (in Spanish) to find additional clues to ascertain the identity of the person who wrote the note card. After finding the person, they engage the classmate in a journalistic interview about that person's experience, taking notes, writing a brief summary, and reporting aloud to the class or to a larger group.

Next, students write a letter or email recommending a visit to a specific national or state park in their area to a hypothetical visitor from a Spanish-speaking country (if students have pen pals or if they partner with Spanish-speaking ESL students at the school, they can actually send the letters to them). In the letter, students should give reasons that support and justify their advice about the suggested park visit, including recommendations for what to see and do, what to take, and when to go. After writing the letters, students pair up and take turns role-playing a conversational exchange by telephone in which one student takes the role of the visitor from a Spanish-speaking country while the other gives the advice.

### Lesson 3: Gathering Information from Authentic Written Sources

#### Objective

Students practice gathering useful information from written texts and practice summarizing and organizing information. Students gain meaningful practice with reading comprehension and learn content knowledge pertaining to the sites they visit. Upon completing this lesson, students will have found, read, and summarized several authentic written sources orally and in writing.

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### Procedure

Students are divided into groups; each group is assigned a country (or, if desired, a group of contiguous countries). Each group is tasked with researching the assigned country or countries to find the most important natural areas and significant environmental issues facing that country or region. The best resource to serve as a point of departure for this investigation is the Latin American Network Information Center site: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/environment>. This site includes information related to all Latin American nations; for educational sites and activities in Spain, consult [www.mma.es/educ/ceneam/enl\\_ceneam.htm#documentos](http://www.mma.es/educ/ceneam/enl_ceneam.htm#documentos).

In order to document their findings and to practice extracting key information from the sources they visit, the students' assignment is to write a summary of at least three sites that they visit, with instructions to use strategies such as rephrasing key points in their own words and quoting key passages. Along with preparing the summaries, students should turn in a printed copy of the original site together with their summary; teacher commentary should revolve around how well they select material to summarize and quote. Students should also share at least one of their summaries orally with the class or in groups.

### Lesson 4: Gathering Information from Authentic Spoken Sources

#### Objective

Students practice gathering useful information from spoken texts; students practice summarizing and organizing information. Students gain meaningful practice with listening comprehension and learn content knowledge pertaining to the spoken segments that they hear. Upon completing the lesson, students will have listened to and summarized several authentic audio sources.

### Procedure

A wide variety of high-quality audio recordings may be found on the United Nations' Spanish-language site: [www.un.org/radio/es](http://www.un.org/radio/es) (these are professionally recorded and produced audio segments that are downloadable as RealPlayer™ or .mp3 files). The UN produces a weekly radio magazine (entitled *Puntos Cardinales* and indexed under "Radio Revistas" on the Web site) that discusses topics that are significant, timely, and relevant to a general audience. Each week's issue consists of a broadcast, approximately 10 to 15 minutes in length, in which typically three or four different topics are discussed. These Webcasts are true gems for the language student, since they usually represent a range of different varieties of spoken Spanish, both Latin American and peninsular, and are spoken clearly and at a measured—but natural—rate of speech. These are also archived

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for access to previous issues; the higher-quality .mp3-formatted files are available from early 2005 on. To access the recordings, go to the UN Spanish radio page (see address above), find “Radio Revistas,” and under “*Puntos Cardinales*,” select “Archivo,” then select the desired issue. Virtually all recent computers with an adequate Internet connection (for example, school, library, or home DSL/cable) will be able to access and play the files.

In this lesson, students will listen to the report on UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) biosphere reserves that is available at [www.un.org/radio/es/pro\\_archive.asp?featureID=3&VarYear=2005](http://www.un.org/radio/es/pro_archive.asp?featureID=3&VarYear=2005). The page features a link to the sound file containing the *Puntos Cardinales* program for the week of August 3, 2005. As with other such files, this one contains several topics, namely the following: “El Comandante de la fuerza de paz de la ONU en Haití habla de la situación en el país,” “UNESCO promueve canje de deuda por educación en América Latina,” “Imágenes de satélite para vigilar el uso de material nuclear,” and last, the one to be used in this lesson, “Reservas de Biosfera: una oportunidad para el desarrollo sostenible” (begins at time marker 10' 37"). In advance of the first listening, the teacher prepares students for the listening activity by assigning a set of questions for prereading:

- What is the main idea of the segment?
- What clues does the title provide about the content?
- How many different speakers are heard?

During the initial listening, students should write a rough summary that includes information that they have extracted from the recording. Emphasis should be made on gathering key points and main ideas rather than direct quotes, although brief, meaningful quotes are also useful. After listening to the sample and writing a summary, students can share their answers to the prereading questions and then answer the following questions based on their comprehension and summary notes:

- What is a biosphere reserve?
- Who came up with the idea of a biosphere reserve, and when?
- Which island was recently declared a biosphere reserve?
- What is one of the main economic activities in the Canary Islands today?
- How can being declared a biosphere reserve be helpful to a place?

After answering the questions above, students then share the information that they have collected in their summaries; after this, students listen again to the article to confirm, correct, or expand their summaries. Care should be taken to emphasize to the students that the ideal summary is not a transcript but rather a rewording or simplification of what was heard.

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### Lesson 5: Writing a Letter to a Biosphere Reserve

#### Objective

Students practice writing a formal letter that requests information and that includes content knowledge pertaining to the written and spoken segments that they have worked with. Upon completing this lesson, students will have written and sent an appropriately formatted formal letter in which they identify themselves, explain their interest, and request additional information.

#### Procedure

Students are again divided into groups, with each group being assigned a different region of the Spanish-speaking world (For example, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, northern Andean nations). Each group locates all the biosphere reserves officially named by UNESCO that are located in their corresponding region (visit this site to identify them: [www2.unesco.org/mab/bios1-2.htm](http://www2.unesco.org/mab/bios1-2.htm)). After preparing a list of all the sites in their region, students choose two different reserves to contact in writing.

To find contact information for each of the reserves:

1. On the main map (which is not labeled) at [www2.unesco.org/mab/bios1-2.htm](http://www2.unesco.org/mab/bios1-2.htm), click the appropriate region.
2. After selecting the region (for example, click on Europe, then on Spain, then on the Canary Islands—La Palma, Isla de El hierro, and Lanzarote), click on the individual biosphere reserve.
3. The UNESCO site for that particular reserve will appear (these are in English); scroll down to “Contact” information. Each reserve has specific contact information, including names and email addresses. There are often additional links, many of which are in Spanish.

While students should be encouraged to create their own letters based on their own interests as matched with the particular reserve, certain key elements should be included:

- Appropriate salutations and formatting for a letter (“Dear biosphere reserve director”)
- Introduction (students identify themselves and the purpose of the letter: “We are three students in a Spanish class in the United States, and we are writing because . . .”)
- A brief summary of one or two points that the students found interesting about the biosphere reserve to which they are writing (“Your biosphere is very interesting to us because . . . and . . .”)

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- The request for information (relevant to student interest and purpose of that particular biosphere reserve: “We were wondering if there is good surfing along the coastline.”)
- Closing salutations (“Thank you for your attention,” “We thank you in advance for your reply,” and so forth)

Students should consult reference manuals to review proper formatting and stylistic elements for letter writing in Spanish; if these aren’t available from classroom resource materials, two helpful online sources are [www.askoxford.com/languages/es/spanish\\_letters](http://www.askoxford.com/languages/es/spanish_letters) and [www.englishspanishlink.com/deluxewriter/letterlayoutspanlet.htm](http://www.englishspanishlink.com/deluxewriter/letterlayoutspanlet.htm).

Students should first submit drafts of their letters to the teacher for approval and suggestions; after their drafts are approved, they should send them with the expectation that they will receive a response to their questions and perhaps even some additional printed material. One procedural detail with this lesson: It is possible to complete this task with either email correspondence or “regular” mail. Of course, either is acceptable for pedagogical purposes; the teacher and/or students will have to decide after weighing the merits and drawbacks of each.

Finally, as potential extensions to this lesson, information gathered in this exchange can be shared with science classes, and the cultural exchange can be reported in a school or local newspaper to raise awareness of Spanish class activities.

### Lesson 6: Preparing and Delivering a Formal Oral Presentation

#### Objective

Students practice integrating language skills (listening, reading) and synthesizing information from different sources to deliver a formal oral presentation. Upon completion of this lesson, students will have done a formal speaking task under conditions similar to those on the AP Exam.

#### Procedure

This lesson involves preparing and delivering a formal academic oral presentation under the same format and conditions as the AP Exam. Before beginning this lesson, the teacher should prepare a facility that will physically approximate the setting in which students will record their speaking responses on the AP Exam.

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As described in the Course Description, this task on the AP Exam calls for students to:

[G]ive an oral presentation in a formal or academic setting. They are asked to read one document and listen to a recording, after which they have 2 minutes to prepare for the presentation and 2 minutes to answer a question related to the sources. Students are encouraged to make reference to and cite all sources.

As a practice stimulus, the written text should be an article of up to 500 words in length followed by an audio selection of two to three minutes in duration on a similar topic.

To execute this lesson, the teacher prepares the written article and the sound file and presents them to the students in a way that approximates the administration of an AP Exam—students read the article, hear the recording, organize their approach, and record their oral presentation into a recording device. Students should be encouraged to take notes when reading and listening to the stimuli and to make full use of available time to organize their talk. It is extremely important to not just consider this lesson to be over after the recording stops; rather, teachers and students should explore ways to continue evaluating the recordings to find how to make the student speech samples more accurate syntheses of the articles as well as how to improve the linguistic qualities of the speech, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and delivery. Sample stimuli (also featured in lesson 7 below) are:

- [www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/evergaldesSP/FEpanther.html](http://www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/evergaldesSP/FEpanther.html) (First section only—this is the written source.)
- [www.auladiez.com/dele-superior/lince.mp3](http://www.auladiez.com/dele-superior/lince.mp3) (This is the spoken source.)

### Lesson 7: Formal Writing

#### Objective

Students practice integrating language skills (reading, listening) and synthesizing information from different sources to produce a written essay. Upon completion of this lesson, students will have accomplished a formal writing task under conditions approximating those on the AP Exam.

#### Procedure

This lesson involves preparing and submitting a formal academic written report following the same format and conditions as the AP Exam. This task is described in the Course Description as follows:

Students are required to read documents, listen to a related source/recording, and then respond to a written prompt. All sources, both written and aural,

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are authentic, either in their original format or rerecorded. Students are encouraged to make reference to and cite all of the sources. Students have 7 minutes to read the printed sources and then listen to a stimulus of approximately 3 minutes. They then have 5 minutes to plan their responses and 40 minutes to write their essays. The total time allotted for this part of the exam is approximately 55 minutes.

First, the written stimuli for this exercise should be selected from thematically related articles of up to 500 words in length, followed by a related audio selection. The teacher prepares the written materials and the sound file and presents them to the students in a context that approximates the AP Exam; students read the texts, listen to the recording, organize their approach, and write the essay. Students should be encouraged to take notes when reading and listening to the stimuli as well as to spend a few minutes after reading and hearing the stimuli to organize their essays.

After the students have finished their essays and turned them in, the teacher photocopied them and gives the copy back to each student for self-correction (alternatively, after removing identifying information, to another student for peer review). Familiar language-class editorial processes can then be followed so that the students' essays become learning tools and so that the students are able to identify and overcome significant problem areas.

Sample stimuli for this lesson (some of which are also used in lesson 6) are:

- [www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/evergaldesSP/FEpanther.html](http://www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/evergaldesSP/FEpanther.html) (First section only—this is the first written sample.)
- [www.wwf.es/especies\\_lince01.php](http://www.wwf.es/especies_lince01.php) (First paragraphs only—this is the second written sample.)
- [www.auladiez.com/dele-superior/lince.mp3](http://www.auladiez.com/dele-superior/lince.mp3) (This is the spoken sample.)

### Lessons 1–7: A Summary

The seven lesson plans presented here represent one approach to addressing all of the new AP Spanish Language Exam tasks while also remaining true to the goals of established national and state standards and frameworks. By identifying a theme (in this case, the environment) with readily accessible materials from a wide range of sources, teachers present students with the opportunity to read and hear a rich variety of language produced by and for many different audiences. Additionally, students are able to interact with their peers in the target language and relate global issues facing the Spanish-speaking world with those same global issues closer to their home. Finally, students are likely to learn content to which they would otherwise not have been exposed—whether that be

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about the Florida Everglades and the Iberian Lynx from these lessons or perhaps about some other interesting and important topic that you prepare for your students. And of course, teachers or students should not be limited by the “lesson plan” in their pursuit of knowledge; it’s a snap to add elements spontaneously to these lessons to match student or teacher interests or to complement studies in other disciplines. Examples include more in-depth study of history, cuisine, art, or sports in countries or regions examined. As long as the basic paradigm of students gathering information from authentic sources and then taking that information and applying it to informal and formal communication is maintained, students will benefit greatly.

### **Beyond the Environment**

The environmental thread followed in the seven lessons detailed above represents only one of many possible themes. A myriad of other possibilities exist; two examples of these are presented below. Either of these, or any other of among many such symbiotic themes, will be successful in preparing students for the AP Spanish Language Exam, increasing their language abilities according to widely accepted professional frameworks and standards, and providing them opportunities to learn more about the world. Some research beforehand by the teacher and a clearly articulated plan in which reading, writing, listening, and speaking occurs in conjunction with relevant and accessible content information and the completion of meaningful tasks virtually ensure a successful outcome.

### **Alternative Theme 1: Music in the Spanish-Speaking World**

This theme is quick to motivate students and can be a very lively introduction to many aspects of the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. With more investigation, students do such things as research and report on the history of different musical genres, present examples of different styles of music, provide samples to the class, discuss song lyrics and explore cultural references contained therein, and write letters to performers, recording studios, or fan clubs (such as Shakira’s, at [www.fanmusical.net/shakira/clubs\\_de\\_fans.htm](http://www.fanmusical.net/shakira/clubs_de_fans.htm)). Students can read about *cumbia* at <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/cumbia> and *merengue* at <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/merengue> (select “estilo musical”) and then write an essay comparing the two and/or give a report to the class (they will probably know how to download musical samples or songs to liven it up!). In addition to the song lyrics themselves, there are many audio samples available in this theme, including “Valorando la música y la danza de los sin voz” in the audio materials from part A of the 2007 exam field test, which is posted on AP Central. Or perhaps your students would prefer a video interview with Ricky Martin (<http://rickymartinmusic.com/page.asp?id=11803>) instead? Literally every musical style in the Spanish-speaking world is well represented with a huge variety of information available, including text, video and audio interviews and shows,

downloadable music (do this legally, of course!), readily available song lyrics, and official and unofficial sites for performers.

### **Alternative Theme 2: Leaders of the Spanish-Speaking World**

Though not as catchy as music or as important as the environment, this theme is extremely flexible and can easily be adapted for intermediate and even high-beginner students. For example, high-beginner or intermediate students can complete tasks geared toward what they already know how to do with the language (describe national leaders by giving names, dates and places of birth, physical descriptions, names and relationships of family members, and so forth). For more advanced students, additional tasks can be included (students can talk about when the leader entered politics, her or his current challenges and platforms, how the country may have changed under her or his leadership, what the opposition says about the leader, and so on). Every Spanish-speaking country has an official site for its head of state, and many even have email and postal addresses for correspondence. To get started, here are just a few:

- Mexico: [www.presidencia.gob.mx](http://www.presidencia.gob.mx)
- Colombia: [www.presidencia.gov.co](http://www.presidencia.gov.co)
- Chile: [www.presidencia.cl](http://www.presidencia.cl)
- Venezuela: [www.venezuela.gov.ve](http://www.venezuela.gov.ve)
- Dominican Republic: [www.presidencia.gov.do](http://www.presidencia.gov.do)
- Equatorial Guinea: <http://presidencia-guinea-ecuatorial.org>
- Equatorial Guinea (government in exile): [www.guinea-ecuatorial.org](http://www.guinea-ecuatorial.org)
- Spain: [www.la-moncloa.es](http://www.la-moncloa.es)
- Spain (royal family): [www.casareal.es](http://www.casareal.es)

Resources for additional countries may be found at <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/government>.

With just these links, students can write and tell about the first elected female president in the Western Hemisphere who was not first known as the spouse of a politician, send an email to the president of Colombia, compare the differences between the royal and political sites in Spain, and describe what the two opposing governments of Equatorial Guinea have to say about each other.

Not excited by these possibilities? Challenge yourself—or your students—to come up with topics that are a better fit. The challenges are great, but the rewards are greater.

### Locating and Adapting Authentic Materials for the AP Spanish Language Course

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#### I. Introduction and Background

This article describes how to find and incorporate authentic materials that can be used to prepare students for the new writing and speaking sections on the 2007 AP Spanish Language Exam. Current research in second-language acquisition supports the use of authentic materials over teacher-authored or teacher-edited materials and emphasizes the importance of developing cultural knowledge along with linguistic competence. The use of authentic materials gives teachers the opportunity to discuss register, form, and other cultural and rhetorical elements that might be eliminated if the material were edited to increase its simplicity. Communicative competence includes the linguistic and social knowledge of how to respond in a variety of situations and the ability to do so appropriately and meaningfully. The goals, or “five C’s,” from the National Standards (based on the protocols of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) are communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Published as part of *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*, these goals provide guidance for promoting cultural awareness as an integral element in language instruction.

The activities proposed in this article require students to use a variety of integrated skills to complete the tasks and emphasize pair work to provide increased opportunity for interactive communication between students. Details about recent changes to the AP Exam format—questions and responses—are available elsewhere in these materials and on AP Central, the College Board’s Web site for the AP Program.

#### II. Speaking Activities Using Authentic Materials

The speaking section of the 2007 exam is divided into an informal and a formal speaking task. Students need to be able to distinguish formal and informal registers and styles and differentiate the two in their own production. Pair and group speaking activities can help them hone their awareness of register and style. Although students will be speaking individually into a microphone during the actual exam, there are multiple advantages to using pair and small-group work to develop speaking skills. In *Teaching Language in Context: Proficiency-Oriented Instruction* (2001), Alice Omaggio Hadley describes the

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importance of creative language practice in which students use language to convey ideas that are meaningful to them. She describes the importance of providing opportunities for students to engage in communicative interaction with each other. In *A Philosophy of Second Language Acquisition* (2003), Marysia Johnson also emphasizes that social activity, especially dialogue, is essential to acquiring language skills. Like Hadley, she stresses the importance of having students speak with each other in the target language. Johnson describes how even in pairs of learners at similar skill levels, there is the possibility of co-construction of linguistic knowledge where the learners develop together a scaffold of knowledge that can improve each learner's own knowledge and skills (130).

All of the activities suggested in this article incorporate multiple types of authentic prompts and require that students synthesize information from the prompts to develop their individual responses. The activities require students to use multiple skills to produce a response. A speaking activity can therefore integrate reading and listening comprehension as well as speaking ability. Classrooms that have a computer with an Internet connection will have an advantage delivering authentic material over classrooms without any technology. Additionally, classrooms that have several computers available to students will enable even greater hands-on access to authentic material than the one-computer class. However, it is possible to find and incorporate authentic material into any classroom setting, no matter its particular resources.

In a recent article on the topic of responding to changes made to the 2007 version of the AP Spanish Language Exam, Brant Hadzima describes the importance of using a student-centered approach to language instruction that stresses integration of multiple skills into each lesson. The activities described below have been developed for classrooms with one or multiple computers. In an effort to be as practical as possible, the activities direct teachers to specific Web sites for certain materials. The Web sites were chosen with consideration for their longevity, but it is possible that a site will be unavailable in the future. If a site described in this article becomes unavailable, the activities can be adapted using other media sources such as movie clips or recorded television programming. The National Standards that each activity addresses are listed after each section.

### **A. Informal Speaking (Simulated Conversation)**

The first part of the speaking section on the AP Exam includes a task that measures speaking skills in an informal setting. Students will interact with a recorded conversation in a role-play situation. They will have five or six opportunities to answer. Each response will be 20 seconds in length. Students will have time to read an outline of the simulated conversation and the instructions before participating in the simulated conversation.

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### 1. Technology-Enhanced Classroom: Going to the Movies Role-Play Activity

Using short video clips can be a fun way to introduce a speaking activity and to incorporate culture into the lesson. In a class with one or more computers and an Internet connection, students can view short video clips of Spanish speakers making plans to go to the movies or other scenarios. The Five College Center for the Study of World Languages has developed the LangMedia Collection, an excellent Web site that provides video clips of authentic speech and highlights regional dialects. The media clips are located at [http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/lm\\_collection.html](http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/lm_collection.html).<sup>\*</sup> Because this site is geared to university-level students, some of the content may not be appropriate for high school students. For example, the “Entertainment” module of the “Spanish in Ecuador” section cautions safety when visiting night clubs. As with all Web-based material, it is wise for teachers to review the content fully before using it in class.

- a. **Preview activity:** Have students in pairs or small groups describe recent movies they have seen and how they typically view movies. Do they go to the theater with their family or friends? Do they watch movies on television or rent movies? What genres of movies do they, their friends, and/or family prefer? [Alternate version: Give pairs of students cards with these and similar questions and have them respond to each other; this format simulates the prompts they will receive on the exam.]
- b. **Viewing activity:** View the video without sound once and ask students to predict what is being said and what is happening in the clip. Then play the video with sound and have students fill in a worksheet with a cloze passage or other short comprehension activity. The transcripts and translations of each clip are available on the LangMedia Web site. Play the video with sound once more and allow students to complete the worksheet.
- c. **Postviewing activity:** Go over the cloze passage as a class. If the students had a lot of difficulty, play the video once more. Ask a couple of comprehension questions. Then have students reflect on how the language used in the video clip might differ from the standard forms they encounter in their textbook. Have students identify elements of the speech that qualify it as “informal.”

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<sup>\*</sup> The videos from the LangMedia site can be accessed online by classroom language teachers. However, for regular and frequent use of the video clips, institutions must purchase the \$25 CD. The CD can be duplicated for all teachers at the school. For more information about availability and the distribution policy of the LangMedia video clips, see <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/access.html>.

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How is the informal speech spelled on the transcripts? Would students actually ever write like the transcripts? Have students compare the informal speech of the clip with how they might speak to their friends. Would they use this same register to deliver a class report or to talk to the school principal?

- d. Speaking activity:** Using the LangMedia clip as a model, have students in groups of two or three plan an outing to see a movie (use a local movie listing, for example); they must choose a day and time, a movie they all agree on, and how they will get to and from the movie (for example, bus, walk, parent drive, sibling drive, cab).
- e. Follow-up activity:** Have one student from each group describe the movie choice made by the group and the reason the movie was chosen. Also, ask that student to explain how the group will get to the theater.

**f. Activities that target the National Standards:**

**Communication—Communicate in languages other than English**

**Standard 1.1**—Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

**Interpersonal communication activity:** Students work cooperatively in groups using the language to negotiate plans for going to the movies.

**Standard 1.2**—Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

**Interpretive communication activity:** Students demonstrate listening comprehension of informal Spanish by native speakers.

**Cultures—Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures**

**Standard 2.1**—Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and the perspectives of the culture studied.

**Practices of culture activity:** Students view video clips that reflect practices of the culture studied.

**Comparisons—Develop insight into the nature of language and culture**

**Standard 4.1**—Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

**Linguistic comparison activity:** Students compare and contrast elements of informal speech in Spanish and English.

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**Communities—Participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world**

**Standard 5.1**—Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

**School and community activity:** Students use the target language in the classroom.

### 2. Technology-Limited Classroom: Going to the Movies Role-Play Activity

The previous informal speaking activity can be adapted for a classroom with a computer and CD-ROM drive but without an Internet connection by ordering the CD of materials from LangMedia (see the earlier footnote). The clips play from the CD, and the activity can proceed as described above.

In a class without a computer, teachers can adapt the previous activity, minus the listening comprehension element, using images and movie synopses from Spanish-language magazines or printouts from online sources. Locate and print the synopses before class. The following site has short synopses of movies that can be printed: <http://es.movies.yahoo.com>. For schedules of individual movie theaters, try [www.yelmocineplex.es](http://www.yelmocineplex.es).

- a. **Preview activity:** Have students discuss recent movies they have seen and how they typically view movies. Do they go to the theater with their family or friends? Do they watch movies on television or rent movies? What genres of movies do they, their friends, and family prefer? Do they typically watch movies in English? Do they ever view foreign films? Does their local theater show many foreign films?
- b. **Reading activity:** Have students in pairs or small groups look at the synopses of two to four movies, identify the genre and audience for the movie, and summarize the plot.
- c. **Postreading activity:** Ask students if they have seen any of these movies or movies with any of the actors recently.
- d. **Speaking activity:** Have students work in groups of two or three to plan an outing to see a movie using a printed schedule. Students must choose a day and time, a movie they all agree on, and how they will get to and from the movie.

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- e. **Follow-up activity:** Have one student from each group describe the movie choice made by the group and the reason the movie was chosen. Also have the student explain how the group will get to the theater.
- f. **Activities that target the National Standards:**
- Communication*
- Standard 1.1**  
**Interpersonal communication activity:** Students work cooperatively in groups using the language to negotiate plans for going to the movies.
- Standard 1.2**  
**Interpretive communication activity:** Students demonstrate reading comprehension of synopses.
- Communities*
- Standard 5.1**  
**School and community activity:** Students use the language in the classroom.
- g. **Additional activities:** Teachers who work in a technology-enhanced classroom can also develop activities that use television commercials. Jean-Marie Boursicot's Film Library on [www.adeater.com](http://www.adeater.com) is a good source for locating Spanish-language commercials. This site contains a database of more than 700,000 commercials searchable by language, product, and country. A fun follow-up activity would be to have small groups of students develop and act out their own commercials. Be advised to preview commercials before showing them because some of the commercials in the database are not appropriate for a high school class.

### B. Formal Oral Presentation (Integrated Skills)

The second part of the speaking section of the new AP Exam is an example of the interpretive and presentational mode. It integrates three skills: reading, listening, and speaking. Students need to give an oral presentation in a formal or academic setting. They will be asked to read a document and listen to a recording, after which they will have two minutes to prepare for the presentation and to answer the question related to the course. Students will be encouraged to make reference to and cite all sources.

#### 1. Technology-Enhanced Classroom: News and Culture Reports

One difficulty in developing an exercise to prepare students for this task is finding appropriate audio and text-based material on corresponding topics. A good

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strategy for locating material is to begin by searching for video- or audio-based reports from a Spanish-language radio or television station. Once an appropriate clip is found, an Internet search on the topic should produce a news article that can be used for the reading portion. Some video- and audio-based news reports will include transcripts. Transcripts can be used to develop listening comprehension activities such as cloze passages for some activities, but they should not be used each time because students will not have this kind of guidance on the exam. A follow-up activity for a news-based listening activity would be to require students to work in small groups of two to three to develop a news report that summarizes the main points and important details from the text-based and audio-based source. The students should also include critical reflection on the sources (What is the point of view expressed? Is there an agenda?) or relate the information in the story to their own knowledge of Hispanic culture or to a personal experience. For example, in a story about a new exhibit at a Spanish museum, the student could be asked to comment about a memorable trip to a museum, a favorite artist, or the subject of the exhibit.

If the teacher wishes to develop a speaking activity that incorporates reading and auditory prompts but is not based on the news, searching a database of annotated teaching materials such as Merlot ([www.merlot.org/Home.po](http://www.merlot.org/Home.po)) may prove fruitful. For example, Merlot contains an entry listing the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service's media- and information-rich site entitled *Corridos sin Fronteras* ([www.corridos.org](http://www.corridos.org)). This site includes short essays on the history of the *corridos*, or narrative songs, written in Mexico and the United States. The following culture-based formal speaking activity was developed using the Smithsonian site. The activity can be adapted for a classroom that is either technology-enhanced or technology-limited. Teachers with a computer and Internet connection in the classroom can access the songs online; teachers without a computer in the class can use a music CD or audiocassette of the material purchased online or borrowed from a school or public library.

### 2. Technology-Enhanced or Technology-Limited Classroom

- a. **Preview activity:** Ask students what kind of music they enjoy listening to. Ask them whether different kinds of popular music might have different messages, purposes, and connotations. What popular country, pop, and rap artists are familiar to students? Do any of these artists have a regular theme or message? Is a certain message associated with any of these styles of music?

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Inform students that they are going to be reading about and listening to *corridos*, a form of Mexican narrative song that often reflects social, historical, and political realities such as the Mexican Revolution, border conflict, and drug trafficking. The teacher should select an essay and a video or audio clip from the site. As of this writing, the links to online scholarly articles were mostly outdated, but other content was available that could be used for the reading portion of the activity. For example, the teacher could print out the Web page under the “Escucha” section that contains a brief history of the *corrido* (“1917–1960: After the Revolution”) and also print out the Web page with more details about four examples of *corridos* from that period: “Filadelfo Robles,” “El registro de 1918,” “Contrabando de El Paso,” and “Pistoleros famosos.” Each page contains additional information about the style or artist, music clips, transcripts of the lyrics, and links to more information.

Even if the class has an Internet connection and multiple computers, it is advisable to make handouts of the readings for the students. These handouts will help guide the students through the activity.

### b. Listening activity

**In a class with an Internet connection:** Play one song from the Web site and ask a couple of comprehension questions of students, or have them work in pairs to fill out comprehension worksheets.

**In a class without an Internet connection or without a computer:** It will be necessary to borrow or buy a CD or cassette with *corrido* music. The Smithsonian Web site lists sources for purchasing CDs of *corrido* music. Play a song and ask comprehension questions, or have students work in pairs to fill out comprehension sheets.

**c. Postreading activity:** Ask students to identify the themes they read about within the song. What do they think of the song? Do they see a connection between the background of the *corridos* and the song they listened to? Provide these questions on an overhead or the blackboard and direct students to share their answers with their partner.

**d. Speaking activity:** Tell students that they will now prepare a short formal report based on what they have just learned about *corridos*. Provide students with a topic for the report and give them two minutes to organize their ideas

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and take notes. Remind students to be mindful of organization and to cite their sources. For the presentation of the report, have students work in pairs or small groups and deliver their oral reports to each other. The goal of this activity is to develop facility in organizing and delivering a report; it will not be possible for the entire class to listen to each student's report. However, the teacher may ask one or two students to deliver their reports to the class. Additionally, if computers or tape recorders are available, the teacher may ask students to record their own response after delivering it to their partner or group for practice. Asking students to share their ideas with each other before recording the response reinforces the communicative aspect of this task and allows students to get feedback from each other.

### e. Follow-up activity

- **In class:** Ask students for their reactions to the new music and the history they have just learned. Did they like the music? Did it remind them of any music with which they are familiar? What surprised them about the history of the *corridos*?
- **In class or out of class:** The Smithsonian site contains directions for an activity in which students write their own *corrido*.
- **Out of class:** Under the “Teachers” link on the Smithsonian site are two fully developed lesson plans for using the *corridos* material in a history-focused lesson. Developing additional homework and activities using these lesson plans will increase the cultural focus of this activity.
- **Out of class:** An additional activity in most parts of the country is for students to investigate the availability of *corridos* in their own community; most music stores have a Latin American/Spanish-language section. Or students could investigate availability on Web sites.

### f. Activities that target the National Standards:

#### *Communication*

##### **Standard 1.1**

**Interpersonal communication activity:** Students work cooperatively in groups using the language to share their reactions to the *corridos*.

##### **Standard 1.2**

**Interpretive communication activity:** Students demonstrate reading comprehension of synopses.

**Standard 1.3**—Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

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**Presentational communication activity:** Students present information and ideas about *corridos*.

### *Cultures*

**Standard 2.2**—Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

**Products of culture activity:** Students read about and listen to products of culture and discuss these products.

### *Connections—Connect with other disciplines and acquire information*

**Standard 3.1**—Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

**Furthering connections activity:** Students acquire information and recognize distinctive cultural viewpoints available through the *corridos*.

### *Comparisons*

**Standard 4.2**—Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

**Culture comparisons activity:** Students are asked to compare musical styles of the *corridos* to styles with which they are familiar.

### *Communities*

#### **Standard 5.1**

**School and community activity:** Students use the language in the classroom.

### III. Writing Activities Using Authentic Materials

#### A. Informal Writing (Email, Letter, Journal Entry, Postcard)

The third part of the writing section in the new AP Exam is an informal writing task. Students will have 10 minutes to read a prompt and write their responses.

It is fairly simple to develop a short writing task for students. However, the student's learning experience in this task can be greatly enriched by contextualization and by the incorporation of authentic materials. This activity can also incorporate listening and speaking skills. Using contextualization allows the student to develop a more meaningful and personal response to the prompts, and the use of authentic materials increases the cultural component of the lesson even if culture is not the main focus of the activity. Use a visual or auditory prompt as the starting point of the informal writing activity. Incorporate questions and time

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for students to work together to answer questions or inquire further about the subject, and then have students engage in a short writing activity related to the theme of the lesson.

### **Technology-Enhanced or Technology-Limited Classroom: Postcard Activity Using Visual Prompts**

Search an image database such as the one published by the REALIA Project ([www.realiaproject.org](http://www.realiaproject.org)) by country or by theme to find several images for the activity. In a class with a computer and Internet connection, show the images directly from the site. In a class with a computer but no Internet connection, save the images to a CD or other storage device and display them. In a class without a computer, print several of the images from the database or simply use photos from travel brochures, personal photos, and so forth.

For example, using the REALIA Project database, choose “Spanish” as target language and “Clothing and dress” as the Theme/Realia type. A selection of copyright-free images of various traditional costumes is presented.

- 1. Preview activity:** Ask students about traditional U.S. holidays and special outfits that might be worn at these occasions and celebrations. Pair work: Ask students to describe their favorite U.S. holiday to their partner. Do they dress up? Do others dress up? Do they attend celebrations or parades on this holiday?
- 2. Viewing activity:** Show students the pictures and ask them to describe what they see. What do they think is going on? Does it look similar to any typical U.S. celebration? The teacher can describe the celebration.
- 3. Writing activity:** Give students brief written directions to simulate the exam format and have them write a postcard, email, or journal entry describing their fictional participation in the celebration as an audience member or actual participant in the dancing, parade, or other activity. The student should write the postcard to a family member describing the event and reflecting on how it is similar to and/or different from a U.S. holiday. Give the students 10 minutes to write.
- 4. In-class follow-up:** Have students exchange postcards or journal entries with a partner and read each other’s work. Choose one or two students to read aloud their cards.
- 5. Out-of-class follow-up:** As a follow-up homework activity, students can do a short Webquest and find more information on a particular celebration.

### 6. Activities that Target the National Standards:

#### *Communication*

##### **Standard 1.1**

**Interpersonal communication activity:** Students describe their favorite U.S. holiday; students read each other's postcard, journal entry, or email and respond to it in the target language.

#### *Cultures*

##### **Standard 2.1**

**Practices of culture activity:** Students work with images that reflect cultural practices.

##### **Standard 2.2**

**Products of culture activity:** Students read about and listen to products of culture and discuss these products.

#### *Connections*

**Standard 3.2**—Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

**Furthering connections activity:** Students recognize a distinctive cultural viewpoint expressed in the celebration or holiday studied.

#### *Comparisons*

##### **Standard 4.2**

**Culture comparisons activity:** Students are asked to compare U.S. holiday celebrations with Hispanic celebrations.

#### *Communities*

##### **Standard 5.1**

**School and community activity:** Students use the language in the classroom.

### 7. Additional Activities

Use an auditory prompt such as music or a taped interview. Have students read a short description about the music style, singer, or the subject of the interview. Use the organization of the previous activity to develop preview, comprehension, and follow-up tasks. The writing task could require students to write a journal entry or a postcard to a friend describing his or her attendance at a fictional concert or a fictional interview with the subject.

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### B. Formal Writing (Integrated Skills)

Perhaps the biggest challenge for the teacher organizing an activity to prepare students for the formal writing task is locating multiple related print and audio materials. The in-class activities can be organized like the other exercises described in this article and can include a variety of listening and reading comprehension checks and pair or small-group work leading up to the formal writing task. Pair work and small-group work in preview, comprehension, and follow-up tasks serve to increase students' engagement in the exercise and to encourage them to answer the questions more thoroughly. During the exam, students will have 55 minutes to consider the audio and written prompts, and then compose the formal essay. However, in-class formal writing exercises can vary in length according to time available. The focus should be on developing students' skills in analyzing and synthesizing information from multiple sources.

A helpful strategy for locating text and audio prompts for practicing the formal writing task is to begin by locating the audio prompt. First, decide on a theme for the writing activity and then locate the audio prompt. For example, if a literary theme is selected, a recorded poem or passage from an audiobook can be used as the audio prompt. Accompany the audio prompt with a text about the author or a passage from a literary work. Most textbooks on the market have ancillary materials suitable for such an exercise. If you select a music theme, you can use a music CD or cassette for the audio prompt. It is fairly easy to search books, magazines, or online sources for related texts.

In addition to the standard audio prompts such as recited poetry or songs, two new technologies provide access to daily news and culture reports that can be used in class as authentic audio materials. First, numerous radio and television stations now offer their audio and video reports online and for free, giving teachers and students access to up-to-date authentic materials that they can watch or listen to via a computer with Internet access. Many major networks archive their online broadcasts, enabling you to use a classroom activity based on a broadcast multiple times.

Second, audio files known as "podcasts" can now be accessed online and then stored to a CD, a portable device like a USB key, or a portable music player like an iPod (hence the term "podcast"). Because you can save and move the podcast, you can use it in a technology-limited classroom. The podcast is comparable to a Web page in that almost anyone can create and publish one. Many news organizations and private individuals, as well as government and educational groups, use podcasts to offer audio programs online at regular intervals.

### 1. Tips on Locating and Using Online News and Radio Broadcasts

If your classroom has an Internet connection, then you can show news and other video broadcasts provided by television stations. Most news broadcasts are easy to use and are indexed to simplify finding a news story. You can show these short videos multiple times and start and stop during the segment if necessary. A list of online news and radio sources is at the end of this article.

There are a few caveats about using video or audio directly from the Web. Be aware that commercial stations have more advertising than public stations, some of which may be inappropriate for high school audiences. The ads may change from week to week, so even if you preview a clip before using it in class, a new ad may display during class. Public stations like Radio Televisión Española are less likely to have commercials. It is also usually the case that Web pages from national organizations are likely to be more stable and long-lived than sites maintained by individual Web authors. Another caveat that anyone who has used technology in the classroom surely knows is that unexpected technical problems such as a slow Internet connection, missing links or pages, or other problems can try any teacher's resolve. It is recommended to have a backup plan when using materials directly from the Web (that is, not saved to disk) and to expect the unexpected.

### 2. Tips on Locating and Using Podcasts

Although podcasting is a relatively new technology, it is, in fact, quite simple. Like radio broadcasts that publish regularly and that have a target audience, many podcasts do the same. Some major news stations, such as ABC News, now have podcasts in Spanish as well as English. As described above, a podcast is simply an audio file made available online that can be saved to a computer, a disc, or a portable storage device. Because they can be saved to many different types of devices (CD, USB key, portable music device), the podcast provides much more flexibility for the teacher. In addition, once a teacher saves the podcast to his or her own CD or other storage device, the podcast can be reused for many years to come. Any exercise developed using a podcast audio file can be reused from year to year.

Like regular radio shows, podcasts are available on a variety of topics and for a variety of audiences. To locate a podcast in Spanish, use the Podcast Directory on Podcast.net, a Web site listed at the end of this article. Be aware that any individual can create and publish a podcast, so the content and production quality will vary from professional to absolute amateur. The Podcast Directory

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includes a short description of each podcast. Once you select a particular podcast, you will have access to a link to each episode in the podcast's history. You can listen to the episode directly by clicking on it (and you can access it in a class with a computer and Internet connection this way, too). To save the audio file, PC users can right-click on it, choose Save As, and save it to a computer's hard drive, a CD, or any other portable storage device. If you use a Mac, simply hold down the Control key as you click on the link, then select Save As to save to your hard drive or other portable storage device. For teachers who use an iPod or other portable music player, it is possible to subscribe to the podcasts and have them saved automatically to your music player each time you connect it to your computer.

Despite the somewhat misleading name of this technology, it is not necessary to have a portable music player such as an iPod to save and use podcasts.

An interesting follow-up activity to using podcasts for listening is to have students create and publish their own news programs as podcasts. Students could create and publish short weekly podcasts with school news or special reports. Rotating the publishing teams from week to week would keep the production manageable. Students can create and publish podcasts free of charge.

### 3. Example of Organization for a Formal Writing Task Activity

- a. **Preview activity:** Ask questions about the theme and see if students are familiar with any aspect of it or if they have personal experience with the subject. For example, if a particular author is to be studied, ask students if they are familiar with the author and the period in which he or she wrote, or ask more general questions about their favorite authors and books. Then give a very brief introduction to the readings and audio file to be played.
- b. **Listening and reading activity:** Ask students to take notes as they read and listen. After playing or reading the listening and reading prompts, discuss reading and listening strategy as a group or have students in pairs share the notes they took. Asking students to share their strategies with a partner or with the group reinforces the communicative nature of the activity.
- c. **Writing activity:** The writing task should be done independently, and the time on task can vary depending on the time available. In-class formal writing tasks do not have to be 40 minutes in length, as shorter sessions focusing on formal writing are also helpful.
- d. **Follow-up activity:** Ask students to swap essays and comment on their partner's essay. Alternatively, project one or two essays on an overhead or make copies and discuss the essays as a class. This kind of follow-up activity

encourages student-centered dialogue even when the main activity is completed independently.

### **IV. A Word About Copyright**

Teachers have always had to consider issues of copyright when using any print, audio, or other material protected by copyright. With the increased availability of many types of media and the ease of duplicating materials afforded by new technologies, educators are faced with the challenge of how to take advantage of exciting new materials while remaining in compliance with copyright laws. The fair-use clause of copyright law does not authorize educators carte blanche to use or duplicate copyright-protected materials. As a general guideline, teachers can show news and video clips and play songs and recorded interviews in face-to-face teaching. It is not permitted to make and keep copies of television programs or online materials for extended periods of time. Additionally, different media types may have different guidelines. The LangMedia Web site, the Merlot database, and the REALIA Project database used in this article were developed for educational purposes, and classroom use is not restricted. See the Web site of each program for details on distribution and delivery guidelines. Commercial radio and television station programming is protected by copyright but can be played in the classroom under the fair-use provision. Commercial programs cannot be copied for long-term storage. Podcasts are created for downloading and copying and, as of this writing, have not been mentioned specifically in copyright law.

Copyright law has been a popular topic of political debate in recent years, and as a result the law has undergone and continues to undergo scrutiny and revision. It is in a teacher's interest to stay informed about copyright law and to model appropriate use of copyright-protected material to students. See the listing of copyright resources at the end of this article for additional information. The local school media center coordinator or librarian is another good source of information on copyright and education for teachers.

### **V. A Final Word About Locating Materials**

There are several helpful resources for AP Spanish Language teachers who wish to find materials. The Teachers' Resources area on the College Board's AP Central Web site includes reviews of textbooks, books, Web sites, and software. You can search this area for specific types of materials for each AP course, including AP Spanish Language. The AP Spanish Electronic Discussion Group connects AP Spanish teachers across the country and provides an active discussion forum for the exchange of ideas and information. Good databases of lesson plans and materials are available for free on the Internet. One such site is the Merlot database, a free and open resource that collects online learning

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materials along with annotations such as peer reviews and assignments. For teachers with no access to the Internet, Spanish-language newspapers and magazines can provide a valuable resource for authentic material. Many public libraries now carry Spanish periodicals and newspapers.

In addition to seeking out sites on one's own, teachers should work closely with their school librarian or media center coordinator. A school's library professional is a trained educator who is a specialist in locating curricular resources. He or she should be able to advise on adapting materials and can also assist with questions about the use of material protected by copyright.

### VI. Online Resources for Developing In-Class Activities

#### A. Copyright

##### 1. Copyright and Fair Use Guidelines for Teachers

Teachers can find copyright guidelines in a chart published by the California Student Media and Multimedia Festival, available at [www.mediafestival.org/copyrightchart.html](http://www.mediafestival.org/copyrightchart.html).

The School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill provides an informative article on copyright on Learn NC (a Web site for K–12 educators): [www.learnnc.org/glossary/copyright#1-3-3](http://www.learnnc.org/glossary/copyright#1-3-3).

#### B. Instructional Materials Databases

##### 1. Teachers' Resources: AP Central

This site includes reviews of textbooks, articles, Web sites, and other teaching resources for AP Spanish Language and AP Spanish Literature. <http://apps.apcentral.collegeboard.com/ResourceSearchParams.jsp>

##### 2. Language Links: A New World of Understanding

This easy-to-navigate site created by Lauren Rosen at the University of Wisconsin includes a compilation of links to teaching materials for language learners and teachers. The site also includes a page of ideas for using World Wide Web resources in the classroom. <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/lss/lang/langlink.html>

##### 3. Merlot

This site is an excellent free and open resource to online learning materials. Materials are annotated with peer reviews and assignments. Search by keyword or

browse by subject. Membership is free but not required.  
[www.merlot.org](http://www.merlot.org)

### C. Literary/Cultural Resources

#### 1. **Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes: La Biblioteca de las culturas hispánicas**

This virtual library provides a wealth of video and audio clips, images, and multimedia materials. The “Videoteca,” “Fonoteca,” and “Ed. Multimedia” catalogs facilitate searching for and locating material on a topic or author. The “Videoteca” contains interviews, documentaries, clips from plays, and recitations of poetry.  
[www.cervantesvirtual.com](http://www.cervantesvirtual.com)

#### 2. **Centro Virtual Cervantes**

This Web site contains multimedia materials and teachers’ guides for reading and grammar activities. Readings are organized into three levels: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. Teacher resources include lesson materials such as pre- and postreading activities, printable readings, background information, and vocabulary lists. A section of the Web site also contains class activities for the four skills. For example, a lesson that presents the present indicative includes very short audio clips with the transcript in Spanish, animated grammar explanations, and a teacher’s guide for a 45-minute lesson on the topic.

Main portal: <http://cvc.cervantes.es/portada.htm>

Readings: <http://cvc.cervantes.es/aula/lecturas>

Multimedia lessons: [http://cvc.cervantes.es/aula/actividades\\_ave](http://cvc.cervantes.es/aula/actividades_ave)

#### 3. **Hispano Music and Culture of the Northern Rio Grande:**

##### **The Juan B. Rael Collection**

This site from the Library of Congress American Folklife Center contains essays, maps, pictures, and audio files of music that can be downloaded or used in a classroom with an Internet connection. Transcriptions and translations of the songs are also available on the Web site.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/rghhtml/rghome.html>

#### 4. **Project Gutenberg**

This site offers the largest online collection of free electronic books and cultural works, including works in Spanish. From the main page, select the “Online Book Catalog” link to search for Spanish-language texts. Copy and paste from the texts to create reading activities.

[www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)

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### 5. **Todotango**

This site allows you to listen to just about every tango that exists and to read the song lyrics as well as information about the singers. It contains links to live and archived radio programs. It also has images from record labels, sheet music covers, vintage advertisements, and artistic images and photos related to the tango.  
[www.todotango.com](http://www.todotango.com).

### **D. Online News and Radio**

#### 1. **RTVE (Radio Televisión Española)**

This is the Web site for National Public Radio and Television of Spain. This easy-to-navigate site includes articles and short videos as well as access to live radio broadcasts.  
[www.rtve.es](http://www.rtve.es)

#### 2. **Spanish Radio Stations**

This site contains links to multiple Spanish-language radio programs, newspapers, and television stations.  
[www.geocities.com/spanishradio](http://www.geocities.com/spanishradio)

### **E. Online Photos, Videos, and Commercials**

#### 1. **The LangMedia Collection**

This site features authentic, country-specific video, audio, and still images from 35 countries in 25 languages. Video clips are organized by subject and are often accompanied by transcripts.  
[http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/lm\\_collection.html](http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/lm_collection.html)

#### 2. **Jean-Marie Boursicot's Film Library**

As mentioned above, the database on [www.adeater.com](http://www.adeater.com) contains more than 700,000 Spanish-language commercials, and they are searchable by language, product, and country.

#### 3. **REALIA Project**

This searchable database contains royalty-free, faculty-reviewed media and photos for the teaching of language and modern culture. It's a good source of photos highlighting daily culture.  
[www.realiaproject.org](http://www.realiaproject.org)

### F. Podcast Information

#### 1. ABC News: Podcasting

Visit the “Exclusiva” section of the network’s podcast page to listen to headlines from Latin America and the Hispanic world. It links to podcasts of Spanish-language news stories.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/Podcasting>

#### 2. Podcast.net: The Podcast Directory

Search this directory for Spanish-language podcasts on topics as varied as entertainment, music, news and media, society and culture, learning and instruction, politics, and more.

[www.podcast.net](http://www.podcast.net)

Spanish-language podcasts: [www.podcast.net/tag/spanish](http://www.podcast.net/tag/spanish)

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### Developing and Integrating Skills at Different Levels

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With the changes made to the 2007 AP Spanish Language Exam, new challenges have emerged. But these are not impossible to overcome. As I will show, teachers can incorporate many activities and steps at any level that will prove to be very useful to students learning Spanish. The key is to make sure we do not use these skill-building activities solely in the AP course but that we begin incorporating them at level 1. Although the exam is at the end of the tunnel, what we do in class is what counts in developing the students' proficiency, and that should be our main objective. One positive aspect of the exam is that it forces us to look at the entire Spanish curriculum and make adjustments and changes. We are world language educators first, and our main objective should be to deliver instruction that makes our students successful users of the language.

To begin, you need to examine your curriculum, especially your textbooks, and make decisions. Too often teachers rely on the textbook and do not go beyond it. I believe this is how you can make the biggest impact on student learning: looking at the textbook and incorporating the resources we now have such as the Internet, where you have a wealth of material that can be easily incorporated into highly effective daily lessons without an enormous amount of extra work.

To keep up with the language and remain current, teachers should be looking at articles on the Internet regularly. This will help maintain a high level of language proficiency and an up-to-date knowledge of the language; at the same time it is an opportunity to find articles that can be used by your students. I keep a file of these articles, organized by theme. Any time I find an article that has some relevance to a particular subject, whether it be clothing, weather, music, ecology, and so forth, I place it in the folder; at the end of a unit, I always try to find something in the folder that is current and authentic to present in class along with the material in the textbook.

I believe the AP Spanish Language course should be a “reading” course. By that I mean we should use reading as the basis to develop all the skills students need, taking into consideration the outcomes of the course. Oftentimes I talk to teachers who begin the school year by reviewing the present tense and then move along to the other tenses as the year progresses. They, in fact, incorporate reading, listening, speaking, and writing, but in general, what drives the course is grammar. By the time students enroll in the AP course, they have covered most of the grammar, but they may have never studied other

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important topics. Starting grammar in a linear fashion takes too much time and tends to lead to the neglect of the other skills.

Frequently, teachers treat this course too much like the other-level language courses. Throughout the year, I keep repeating what I have told so many teachers at my workshops to tell their students: “The AP course is a college-level course. You must take responsibility for your own learning.” Remember that you are giving the students not only the opportunity to improve their language but also “college class experience.” Thus you must make them responsible for the work they do outside the classroom in preparation for class activities, discussions, and so on. Class time should be used to deal with appropriate language usage and, of course, to introduce irregular structures they may not have learned in previous courses. Your aim should be to refine their ability to use language that is semantically and grammatically accurate according to a given context. The ultimate goal is effective communication.

A student can get a very solid foundation in the language by using readings as a point of departure to develop all other skills. The pressure and the limited time we all have due to other activities that take place during the school year do not allow for time to use grammar as the driving force in the course. Reading is the best way to acquire vocabulary, grammar, cultural knowledge, and so forth. Students see the vocabulary in context, and they must learn from day one of the beginning course to rely on their knowledge of the English language to extract the meaning of sentences by using what they know. Later, they can learn to acquire the meaning of short paragraphs and longer passages.

Just recently my students read a short story (“Jacinto Contreras recibe su paga extraordinaria” by Camilo José Cela) in which the following sentence appeared: “¡Qué alegría se iba a llevar la Benjamina, su señora, que la pobre era tan buena y tan hacendosa!” Students wondered what *hacendosa* meant. First, I asked them to read the previous sentence in which the narrator says how happy the main character is. Then I asked them to concentrate on the adjectives used to describe la Benjamina. Obviously, everything said about la Benjamina is positive. We moved to *hacendosa*, which most likely had to be another positive adjective to describe her. “Is there any part of the word you understand?” I asked. They of course recognized *hacen*. We discussed what *hacer* meant, and finally they came up with the fact that the word means “hard working” (not the exact meaning of the word, but close enough for them to get a sense of what the author is trying to express). One student mentioned that he knew another word in which something similar happens: *quehaceres*. This is the type of interaction students should have at this level. Can you imagine how well students would be reading if taught in this way at beginning levels of language learning?

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Students at the beginning levels rely on vocabulary lists before they read a text. They do not have the resources to engage in the type of discussion I had with my AP students above. But as students move to more advanced levels, vocabulary lists before reading should be avoided. Vocabulary lists act as “crutches” that the students rely on throughout their study of Spanish. When students have to look up words they do not know in the dictionary, they get frustrated, and in the end, they give up trying to read an assigned story or an article. In real life, they do not go to the dictionary to look up unknown words, or they do so only rarely. Besides, how many students will go back and try to understand a paragraph after they have spent 10 minutes looking up 10 or 15 words? Not many. If the same students were to find themselves in a conversation with a Spanish speaker, and they did not understand what the person was saying, they would use visual cues (facial expressions, hands movement, and so on) and the context of the conversation, and they would ask questions to clarify what that person was saying. This is the type of interaction students should have with the written text. But they will not be able to do this if we teach them to learn a vocabulary list before they approach an article, a short story, or a play. Furthermore, students who are accustomed to studying a vocabulary list before reading the text learn the words, then take a quiz. They probably do very well, but once the story is finished, the majority will have forgotten most of the words they learned. This is not an effective way to increase their vocabulary or teach them how to read.

### Developing Different Skills from the Beginning Levels

I am a believer in teaching students early on to use the key word strategy. I assign students a paragraph, and they must select the key words they would need to tell a person who has not yet read it what happens in that paragraph. The following passage appears in the level 1 textbook, *Bienvenidos* (Schmitt and Woodford, 1997):

[**Editor’s Note:** The College Board is awaiting permission for this excerpt. It may be found in *Bienvenidos*, 1997, p. 262, by Glencoe/McGraw-Hill.]

As homework, students choose the key words. The next day I ask three or four students to write all the words they chose on the board, and then I eliminate words that are repeated and that, in other students’ opinion, are not really key words—*verdad*, *hispanos*, *dice*, and *madriileño*, for example. A word such as *infierno* is a good choice because when we think of *infierno* we think of fire, heat, and burning. Having that word in their list will trigger students to talk about the “hot weather” Madrid has. Some students may also choose terms like *nueve meses*, *tres meses*, or *refrán*, which are not bad choices either, since students would be able to express the fact that winters are nine months long and summers generally last three months. Once we have narrowed the list down to perhaps eight to ten

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words or a group of words, students close their books, and using those words, they tell the class what the paragraph says. Needless to say, they will not be able to express their ideas as eloquently as the paragraph, but they begin to create with the language.

This is without a doubt the first step in teaching students to summarize information. Selecting key words must be clearly taught, as students may never have done this before. The idea is to teach students to select information that is important so they can summarize, compare, and contrast. And do not forget to always give students the opportunity to incorporate their own opinions about the topic into any presentation, oral or written.

This may be a good time to talk about some adjectives to describe where someone is from: Madrid, *madrileño*; Barcelona, *barcelonés*; Sevilla, *sevillano*; Lima, *limeño*. You can also speak about the use of sayings in the Spanish-speaking world and introduce a few of them, as well as discuss the use of the metric system (centigrade vs. Fahrenheit). This is a good opportunity to introduce some authentic material from the Web. Usually the weather forecasts in the textbooks are adapted, and they do not allow the students to try to decipher other weather expressions they should learn. Students can also read an article from a particular part of the Spanish-speaking world so that, using the idea of key words, they can, for example, draw relationships between the differences in weather in two different cities.

Even at this basic level, you can ask students to infer the type of clothing they would need if they were to visit Madrid during August or December, for example. They can investigate when and where Spaniards are most likely to take their vacations. Although these questions may seem simplistic at first, they are the first steps in training students to make inferences when they read more difficult texts. Students can then have a conversation in which they try to convince their Spanish pen pal as to when it would be better to come to their town or city in terms of the weather. Students at this level can begin to persuade someone to do something without the use of the subjunctive. For example:

Es mejor venir durante el verano porque hace buen tiempo. No llueve mucho. Hace sol siempre. Podemos ir a la playa todos los días porque durante el verano no tengo clases.

You may also try to give your students two or three connecting words that they can incorporate into their conversation or writing, such as *además*, *por eso*, and *en primer lugar*. The same paragraph, after you have asked them to try to use these connecting words, may sound as follows:

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En primer lugar, es mejor venir durante el verano porque hace buen tiempo. No llueve mucho. Además hace sol siempre. Por eso, podemos ir a la playa todos los días porque durante el verano no tengo clases.

Although it may sound somewhat contrived, you can clearly see how the second example flows better than the first one. I have tried to incorporate as many words as possible into a paragraph of four sentences to prove my point. In longer discourse, you should expect students to use these connecting words in a couple of places within a paragraph, not in every other sentence. The same applies to conversations.

If you want to use the idea of the conversation between a student and a pen pal, you may consider incorporating the weather forecast from a city in a Spanish-speaking country. The following comes from El Patogónico online ([www.elpatagonico.net/home.html](http://www.elpatagonico.net/home.html)):

**Chubut:** nubosidad variable. Probabilidad de chaparrones aislados.  
Ascenso de la temperatura mínima. Descenso de la temperatura máxima.  
Viento fuerte a muy fuerte del noroeste.

**Santa Cruz:** cielo nublado a parcialmente nublado. Probabilidad de lluvias aisladas. Mejorando. Fresco. Viento regular del noroeste, cambiando a fuerte del oeste. Posterior descenso de temperatura.

**Tierra del Fuego:** cielo nublado. Probabilidad de lluvias aisladas. Frío.  
Viento regular del noroeste, cambiando al sector oeste.

**Islas Malvinas:** cielo nublado. Probabilidad de lluvias. Mejorando hacia la noche. Ascenso de la temperatura mínima. Poco cambio de la temperatura máxima. Viento muy fuerte del sector norte, cambiando al sector oeste.

This is a good way to have students incorporate new words and expressions into their vocabulary. As you can see, this text includes many vocabulary words not normally found in a textbook.

Since you are discussing weather and activities during the summer, you may also consider having students read the following piece from *El Comercio*, a newspaper from Perú. (The home page of the newspaper's Web site is [www.elcomercioperu.com.pe/online](http://www.elcomercioperu.com.pe/online), and this text can be found there on this page: [www.elcomercioperu.com.pe/especiales/playas2006/playa%5Frecomendaciones.html](http://www.elcomercioperu.com.pe/especiales/playas2006/playa%5Frecomendaciones.html).)

### **Recomendaciones para un buen día de playa**

No se aleje de la orilla, nade en forma paralela a la playa, nunca mar afuera.

No ingrese al mar luego de haber ingerido alimentos o bebido licor.

No ingrese al mar con colchonetas u otros artículos inflables.

No nadar en zonas rocosas, ni donde exista corriente marina.

No efectuar competencia de natación.

Evite la práctica de deportes en áreas de concurrencia de público.

Veranee en playas donde exista una Unidad de Salvamento Acuático.

This short section can be a good place to review or introduce the formal commands. Remember, you do not have to give a long, detailed lesson on commands; you can briefly touch on the subject and later study them in depth when the timing is more appropriate.

As you can see, I have incorporated authentic materials into one unit of the textbook. Needless to say, I do not suggest you do all this within one particular unit. I just intend to show you how to take a section of the textbook and make it far more interesting and beneficial to your students.

Among other things, I have incorporated into this particular lesson the following ideas and skills:

- Summarizing
- Synthesizing (if you use more than one source)
- Oral expression
- Listening
- Grammar acquisition
- Vocabulary development
- Recognizing cultural elements

These are just a few from the “Evidence” list that appears in the AP Central article “AP Spanish Language Update on Changes to the Course and Exam.”

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This type of exercise is much more valuable than having students write a dialogue using dictionaries, which seemed to be the norm not long ago. First, students spend far too much time deciding what they are going to say, then they look up words that the rest of the class will not understand and words that they will most likely forget. I am not saying that there is no room for this type of exercise at the beginning levels, but it should be used sparingly. As a matter of fact, I do not believe in using dictionaries in language classes, and, at the AP level, I keep their use to a minimum. Even AP level students do not have the language resources to be able to choose the right word. If they use a dictionary to write, we know the type of sentences we often get, which don't make much sense. If they use the dictionary for reading, we know how frustrating this activity can be. I recommend limiting dictionary use to students looking up words of the same family, such as *hacer*, *quehaceres*, *hacendosa*, and *deshacer*.

According to the “Evidence” list in “AP Spanish Language Update on Changes to the Course and Exam,” the AP Spanish Language student can:

- Identify and summarize the main points and significant details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a spoken source, such as a broadcast news report or a lecture. . . .
- Identify and summarize main points and important details and make appropriate inferences and predictions from a written text, such as a newspaper or magazine article or a contemporary literary excerpt.

By doing activities at all levels similar to the ones described above, you can teach your students to do the same when they encounter more difficult texts, either spoken or written. This skill will prove useful not only for the AP Exam but also in other academic subjects as well as in real life. After all, although I refer to the exam throughout this article, do not forget that you want to give the students the necessary skills to use in their interaction with native speakers.

Many of the skills described above can also apply to listening, and in today's world it is very easy to obtain podcasts, video clips, audio reports, and so on from an endless number of sources from the Spanish-speaking world. As with the written articles, you can also incorporate them in your lessons.

### Skills and the AP Course

In this article, I have taken a common theme that appears in many textbooks and shown how you can incorporate these activities at any level of the language sequence. If you

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think for a moment, you can see how well prepared your students will be if you follow a similar approach throughout the curriculum. By the time the students enroll in the AP course, they will have acquired a wealth of techniques and skills that will prove extremely useful when dealing with more complex texts.

Looking at the new type of questions that will appear in the 2007 exam, I would like to give one more example of how you can help students develop some of the needed skills.

The following excerpts come from two magazines, *Revista Más* and *Américas*. The excerpts describe the beginnings of two men who are now very successful.

From *Revista Más*:

### **Venzor el vencedor: De dormir en la calle a propietario de galería de arte por Ricardo Vela**

Venzor es un ejemplo de determinación y tenacidad. Huérfano de padre a los cinco años, pasó su infancia en orfanatos, primero en su ciudad natal y luego en Ciudad Juárez. Al otro lado de la frontera, en El Paso, su madre trabajaba como doméstica para sostener a los hijos.

“Creo que el crecer en un orfanato me ayudó a tener la fortaleza para enfrentarme a la vida más adelante”, comenta Venzor. En esos años desarrolló el gusto por el arte. “Cada vez que iba a la capilla del orfanatorio, me deleitaba mirando los frescos, preguntándome quién habría sido el autor de esas obras de arte.” (53)

From *Américas*:

### **Armónica odisea: Luis Batlle Ibáñez por Caleb Bach**

Físicamente, era un niño muy débil. En el lado paterno de la familia había habido muchos casos de tuberculosis en una época en que no se contaba como ahora con los antibióticos. A mi madre siempre le preocupaba que me ocurriera algo así, y cuando empecé la escuela y me enfermé, el médico aconsejó que me mudara de la ciudad y buscara el aire puro del campo. Así lo hicimos. Nos trasladamos a una casa de campo situada a unos quince kilómetros de la capital, en el camino a la Colonia del Sacramento. Mi padre viajaba diariamente a la ciudad, donde dirigía el periódico *Acción*, de propiedad de la familia. . . . [Mi madre] no sabía qué hacer conmigo—tenía entonces cinco años—pero como provenía de una familia

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musical y sabía que me gustaba la música y cantaba bien, pidió a su tío que le prestara un piano. Al describir el momento, mi hermano Jorge siempre dice que me senté en el piano y nunca lo dejé. Creo que es cierto, porque empecé a tocar, me gustó, y nunca dejé de hacerlo. (50)

These two texts allow us to illustrate how you can take students through a step-by-step process to compare and contrast the lives of these two men. (Obviously, these are just excerpts, and the actual articles contain more information.)

Again, the first step should be selecting key words to summarize the two passages. Then, use a graphic organizer to help students zero in on the information that is important. They can then use this information to synthesize the ideas expressed about the two people. The graphic organizer could look something like this:

	José Venzor	Luis Batlle Ibáñez
Padres	<i>huérfano de padre</i>	<i>padre y madre</i>
Profesión de los padres	<i>madre doméstica</i>	<i>padre periodista</i>
Interés	<i>el arte</i>	<i>la música, el piano</i>
Tipo de vida que parecen haber llevado	<i>difícil</i>	<i>cómoda</i>

You may also want the students to explain where they found the information in the text and why they have said, for example, that the life of Venzor could be described as difficult and the life of Batlle Ibáñez as comfortable. These first steps are key to understanding how to summarize and synthesize information from two or more sources, be it from a listening selection or from a written article. Once the students are able to talk about the differences between the lives of these two men, they can write about them and express opinions about what they have heard or read. You can use more follow-up exercises, but this example illustrates the beginnings of developing a good essay, taking into consideration what students will be asked to do starting in 2007.

I hope you can see why I am a true believer in using reading as a point of departure to develop all the other skills. Teachers do not need to change overnight. The important thing is to be aware of the wealth of information you can bring to your students to enrich their study of the Spanish language and culture. In this short article, I cannot cover all the different aspects that you can exploit while teaching at the AP level and, most

importantly, at **any** level. These activities and ideas are just the beginning of how you can begin a long-lasting change as a world languages educator and make your students more proficient in the language and thus more successful in the AP course.

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### Your AP Spanish Language Class—It’s More Than the Exam

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“What do you mean the picture sequence is gone?”

“How will I teach my AP course?”

Immediately go to AP Central, where you will find everything you need to begin preparing your students for the new AP Spanish Language Examination. By the way, don’t spend too much time looking for the scoring guidelines, because you’ll think you missed them. They haven’t yet been created.

I completely understand the feeling of resistance to change. Many of us have been teaching the AP Spanish Language course for years. We are comfortable about the methods we implement to prepare our students. We systematically and routinely work with the published samples from the examination to ensure that our students can perform the required tasks that may be the foundation for our course. We are proud that we make our students practice endless direct responses, countless picture sequences, and never-ending compositions. We do this without any hesitation because we are familiar with the tasks and the evaluating tools. However, now that we are faced with the elimination of these oral performance tasks and the composition as we know it, we should not react by assuming that we must change our teaching or that we lack the expertise to produce students who will perform well. What should we do?

The first step is to become familiar with AP Central and all that it offers. Your immediate reaction might be to search for the new exam format and the field-tested questions. Yes, you need this information, but you need to do something else before that. You should first read the rationale for creating the new exam in the site’s article “AP Spanish Language Update on Changes to the Course and Exam.”

Why take time to do this when you have been teaching this course or some others for so many years? The reason is simple. Are you “teaching to the test,” or are you teaching a course designed to give students the tools to use the Spanish language meaningfully in oral and written forms? Can your course help students to listen, read, write, and speak in Spanish with sophistication? Is your course delivered at the college or university level?

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By taking the time to acquaint yourself with the rationale, the claims, and the evidence, you will be better able to answer these questions.

As I read through the claims about identifying and summarizing main points with detailed facts, both in oral performance and in written work, I realized that my fondness for the picture sequence might not match up with what my students should know and be able to do. If I want my students to acquire and use information from printed and audio sources, and to describe, narrate, or present information with control of grammar and with varied and advanced vocabulary, I need to accept that I am not teaching activities for an exam. I am teaching the language.

When I came to this realization based upon what I learned from the rationale, the claims, and the evidence, I was ready for the second step—taking a good look at my teaching. Will my AP course be exactly the same as yours? No. There are as many teaching styles and approaches as there are teachers. Your AP course is what you need it to be and what you make it to be. All sorts of factors contribute to the design of your AP course. You should consider the demographics of your school. If your class comprises mainly heritage speakers, your class design should look much different from that of a class with few or no heritage speakers. You also need to consider your school's daily schedule. If your school follows a traditional eight- or nine-period schedule, your class planning will be much different from the class in a block schedule of 60 to 90 minutes. You must consider all these factors and others when you design your AP course. Regardless of the local variables, you must go back to the rationale, claims, and evidence. With these in mind, you should begin to apply them to your particular class situation.

Now that you have accomplished the design of the course, you are ready to teach it. Clearly, there are multiple successful approaches to delivering the AP Spanish Language course. The mere fact that there is not a published syllabus but rather suggested guidelines implies that you are free to teach your course in a way that best suits both you and your students. Designing the course with the rationale, claims, and evidence combined with the local school's requirements is essential to ensuring student success.

Next, consider activities that parallel tasks that appear on the AP Examination. If you do, you will not be so fearful of the exam. The questions in the new exam ask your students to do what you probably already do daily in your class. Even if you are not doing such tasks now in your classroom, your students may be performing some of these tasks in other classes or in other content areas. The challenge is to be sure that your classroom and your style include these approaches.

## Special Focus: Integrating Skills Using Authentic Materials

Listening activities haven't changed since we began teaching languages. Every teacher has engaged students in listening activities by speaking to the students, by dictating passages, by playing comprehension passages, by reading out loud, and by playing music in the classroom. These practices build comprehension skills. Students will need these same aural skills for the 2007 exam. The new exam format includes listening comprehension questions that are similar to those in the past, and it also integrates reading. Those who see this as a problem are forgetting that the AP course demands that students constantly read. If you do not require your students to read for every class or read in every class, you are missing an opportunity. I am not suggesting that your AP Spanish Language course become a version of the AP Spanish Literature course. Your students should read on a daily basis anything from an advertisement to a literary masterpiece. Keep in mind that you cannot simply ask your students to read. Just as you teach grammar and writing, you need to teach reading. Students need to know strategies for how to read and how to record information. They may be good readers in their first language, but reading in a second language requires different skills. As the teacher of this course, you need to address this. You cannot simply say to your students, "Read." For the new exam task, you need to partner reading with a listening exercise.

We all have our favorite listening samples. My students like music, so I try to capitalize on this. Since I first began teaching, I have tried to incorporate music into my lessons. I often have music playing in the background as my students enter the classroom. I try to play all types of music. I want them to be familiar with classical musicians, traditional songs that reflect the culture of Spanish-speaking peoples, and popular groups of the day. I select music that has a connection with what I am doing in class. I may choose a song because the lyrics contain subjunctive conjugations or because they are based on a certain historical event. When I first learned of the new integrated tasks on the examination, I began to look for a particular song and then search for an article about the song, the performer, or the event so that I could create a listening/reading lesson for my class. You can easily partner any contemporary artist with an article from *People en español*. I type the lyrics and delete words or phrases to develop a cloze passage. While we listen to the song, my students listen for the missing vocabulary. I try to delete a combination of high-frequency vocabulary and new vocabulary. These become part of our required vocabulary list for the unit of study. These are also the words or expressions that students will need so they can discuss the music and article. After listening to the music, my students must read the article and write a summary of it. In the next class session, I play the song again and ask my students a question that requires them to partner the listening with the reading selection. For example, I may ask them to tell me how they see the singer's life reflected in the lyrics of his music. I find that the more I do this, the easier the task becomes for the students. As they read and listen, they

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know what the intent of the exercise will be, and they are better prepared to write or to speak. Try beginning with Juanes, the Colombian pop singer. My students love the music and can relate to his lyrics, which are clear enough for them to understand. Check him out on these Web sites: [www.juanesweb.com/index.htm](http://www.juanesweb.com/index.htm) or [www.juanes.net/archive](http://www.juanes.net/archive).

The concept of combining sources for formal writing is not new. We have used this task in writing projects that we have given our students since we began teaching. We like sending them home to investigate sources and to learn about all sorts of cultural topics. We then ask them to synthesize the information into a well-organized and well-developed composition. Why are we apprehensive about doing this on an examination? Personally, I like this change, for obvious reasons. The majority of my students are excellent writers. Our school has a wonderful writing program that begins in the elementary schools, so that when students enter my classroom, they know how to write a well-organized and well-developed essay. I merely have to give them the tools to carry this writing skill over to Spanish composition. That hasn't changed. A great advantage of the new writing task is that, although a student may know how to write a very good to excellent composition, he or she may often lack creativity and vocabulary resources. The new writing task is not challenging students as to whether they have a creative flare or if they have reviewed a list of words. By listening to and reading selections, students are provided ideas to develop and the words to be able to do so. Furthermore, if you were to ask your students about this "new" type of writing, I am sure that many would tell you that they are already doing the "new" task in their English or history classes.

The question of grammar remains the same. Is my course a grammar course, or is grammar blended into my approach? Do I merely review grammar through warm-up exercises and homework from a workbook? As all language teachers know, we can never give enough regardless of how much a student wants. Grammar and control of syntax are very important. However, a teacher must learn to provide the opportunities for students to improve grammar through review and practice. How do you do that? The first question I ask myself is this: if I were in a college classroom and not a high school classroom, would I be approaching grammar in the same way and in the same amount? That helps me to design my course and my activities. Rather than spend weeks reviewing adjective clauses and adverb clauses, mixed with my favorite "if clauses," I ask students to read about subjunctive from a text source. I then remind them of how "if clauses" work. I ask them to demonstrate their knowledge by requiring inclusion of the subjunctive in their next composition. As my school requires that each course test "complex thinking skills," I find that I can determine what my students know about a grammar topic such as the subjunctive by giving them a text and asking them to analyze

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and explain why the subjunctive is required. If they can explain it, then I know that they understand it. Now it becomes a simple matter of reminding them to use it in their speech and writing.

I continue to like the picture sequence. I have found it to be an effective exercise in my course. My students perform the sequence exactly as needed for the pre-2007 exam format. We also use the picture sequence for vocabulary building and tense sequencing. After the first relating of the sequence, we enhance the story by including idiomatic phrases and advanced grammar structures. So what does that mean? The picture sequence may be gone from the AP Exam but not from my class. I believe that I have never taught Spanish to my students merely for gaining college credit. I have always taught my students the mechanics of the language, the culture of the Spanish-speaking world, and the love of language. I plan to continue. The changes in the AP Examination format should not be a challenge for you. You should look to them as guidelines for organizing the best course that you can possibly offer to your students based on their needs and their school environment.

The scoring guidelines for the 2007 exam cannot be established and finalized until the first scoring of the exam in its new format. Just as within your classroom, although you have an idea of what the rubric should be at the time you create a new task, more than likely you change the rubric after you have applied it for the first time. You know better what the rubric should say after you have seen the results of student work. You improve upon it. I am glad the scoring guidelines haven't been established and published. I want there to be flexibility in the guidelines when the exam is given so that my students and yours will benefit. In my own classroom, for the time being I create my own rubric. I look at what the exam asks the students to do, I consider the descriptors that I am accustomed to using according to AP scoring guidelines, and I write a rubric for my own grading purpose. A wealth of indicators in the scoring commentary accompanies the field test student samples on AP Central. Once there are established scoring guidelines, I'll use them. Remember, my entire course is not an AP Exam; it's more than the exam.

### Activities

Now that you know you should not fear the examination, and that the types of exercises in the examination are activities you should be doing in your class as a regular routine, I offer you some help. Here are some activities that I have attempted since I first learned of the new exam questions. Feel free to use them as they are presented. However, since I too am experimenting, please go ahead and embellish and improve on what I have done.

As I create my own tasks, I make sure that the level of difficulty is similar to the AP Examination. In my everyday lessons, I use a variety of resources such as articles from *People en español*, Authentik ([www.authentik.com](http://www.authentik.com)), *Puerta del Sol Audio Magazine*, popular and traditional songs, news articles downloaded from Spanish newspapers such as *ABC* or *El País*, and selections that I tape from *Univisión*. In experimenting with my own tasks, I first determine what I can use from the published AP Released Examinations. It is a bit more difficult to find recorded material than written material, so I also look through the published AP Released Exams to see what recorded material I can use. The following activity is one of the results.

The 1984 AP<sup>®</sup> *Spanish Language Released Exam* has an interesting lecture titled “Leyendas Hispanoamericanas” that includes an explanation of the origin of *yerba mate*. Since the lecture includes other myths, you do not need to play the entire recording.

I use the introduction and the portion of the selection that narrates the legend of the origin. For a written text source, I use the second edition of *AP Spanish: Preparing for the Language Examination* by José M. Díaz (see his article on page 50 of this collection), Margarita Leicher-Prieto, and Glenn J. Nadelbach. In this guide, narrative number 1 relates an event concerning *yerba mate* that once happened in Argentina. Rather than use the tape, I copy the transcript from page 24 of the teacher’s manual of the text for my students to read. I then assign the following task:

In your Spanish class, you are studying a unit on Argentina, its history, and its culture. You are to prepare a formal presentation on a topic that interests you. You have decided to speak about *yerba mate*—**what it is and what is its history.**

You can create similar activities for other combinations of listening and reading materials.

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The informal oral task is less of a challenge, as this is a very typical activity that I do in the language lab on a regular basis. I have always included simulated phone conversations, even before this became a new examination task. I also have students leave messages on an answering machine since it is a real-life activity and not simply a contrived task.

Here is a task to assign when reviewing the vocabulary of *la casa y los muebles*. It is appropriate for the informal speaking task.

Ud. está leyendo el periódico cuando ve este anuncio. Como Ud. busca una nueva casa desde hace mucho tiempo, el anuncio le llama la atención.

### **Paso 1 Lea Ud. el anuncio** en silencio

De Venta o de Alquiler: una casa particular en una vecindad tranquila cerca de escuela/mercado. Perfecta para una familia pequeña o para un(a) soltero(a) a un precio perfecto. Para más información, llame 738-9214 hoy.

### **Paso 2 Llame Ud. al número** para recibir más información

¡Un problema! Nadie está en casa. Deje Ud. su mensaje en el contestador. Tendrá solamente 2 minutos para grabar su mensaje.

Ud. tiene 2 minutos de silencio para organizar lo que Ud. quiere decir y preguntar.

Empiece Ud. ahora.

## **Simulated Phone Conversation**

Not long after the new exam tasks were published on AP Central, the vocabulary in our lesson was *la salud*. I decided to create a telephone conversation question similar to the sample.

Here are both the questions that I gave to my students and the script for the tape. I asked one of my former students who is a heritage speaker to read the part of Enrique.

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### Script

#### ¡Qué lástima que estés enfermo!

You will listen to and participate in this telephone conversation between you and your friend Enrique. You will hear Enrique speak, and then you should respond. Your response lines should include the following suggestions.

Enrique: Hola, soy yo, Enrique. ¿Qué pasa contigo, amigo?

Line 1: Tell Enrique that you are not feeling well.

Enrique: ¡Qué lástima! ¿Qué tienes?

Line 2: Tell Enrique that you have a cold and mention some symptoms.

Enrique: Amigo, es claro que tienes un catarro de primavera.

Line 3: Ask Enrique for suggestions. Also ask his opinion about seeing a doctor.

Enrique: No sé si es muy necesario que vayas al médico pero recomiendo que descanses y que no salgas de casa.

Line 4: Tell Enrique that it's necessary for you go to school tomorrow because you have an important test in your math class.

Enrique: Amigo, tienes que cuidarte. Claro, el examen es importante pero el señor Rodríguez es muy simpático. El entenderá.

Line 5: Tell your friend that you are going to stay in bed tomorrow. Ask him if he will find out the homework assignment for the next class.

Enrique: No hay problema. Es importante que estés sano muy pronto. Te llamaré cuando yo vuelva a casa.

Line 6: Express your thanks and wish your friend a good day or good luck on tomorrow's test. End the conversation.

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### Student Questions

#### **¡Qué lástima que estés enfermo!**

You will listen to and participate in this telephone conversation between you and your friend Enrique. You will hear Enrique speak, and then you should respond. Your response lines should include the following suggestions.

Enrique:

Line 1: Tell Enrique that you are not feeling well.

Enrique:

Line 2: Tell Enrique that you have a cold and mention some symptoms.

Enrique:

Line 3: Ask Enrique for suggestions. Also ask his opinion about seeing a doctor.

Enrique:

Line 4: Tell Enrique that it's necessary for you go to school tomorrow because you have an important test in your math class.

Enrique:

Line 5: Tell your friend that you are going to stay in bed tomorrow. Ask him if he will find out the homework assignment for the next class.

Enrique:

Line 6: Express your thanks and wish your friend a good day or good luck on tomorrow's test. End the conversation.

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The first time we did this activity, my students did not perform very well. I was somewhat surprised; I thought they would do well because they were familiar with all the vocabulary. They told me that they just didn't know what they were to do. On the second attempt, once they knew the format of the task, they did much better. I have since created other telephone conversations, and my students continue to improve each time.

I offer you one more sample—my scoring guidelines. As I mentioned earlier, the scoring guidelines for the time being are the rubrics that you design for your tasks. Since I need to evaluate these tasks in alignment with my grading system and with an idea of what the AP level may include, I created the following rubric. I am not sure if it is anything like the scoring guidelines that will be used when the new examination is scored. As all rubrics in my school are four-point rubrics, I used four points here. Again, I invite you to take what you like and adjust for your own use.

<b>Scoring Guidelines—The New Tasks</b>		
<b>4</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The topic is completely accomplished.</li> <li>• All or almost all required information is included.</li> <li>• The speech sample is completely or almost completely comprehensible.</li> <li>• The speech sample demonstrates good fluency.</li> <li>• There is very good control of structures.</li> <li>• A wide variety of vocabulary is used with precision.</li> <li>• There may be some errors but without patterns.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>		
<b>2</b>		
<b>1</b>		
<b>0</b>		

(Fill in the descriptors as you want for the other categories.)

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I hope that my ideas will help you to create your own practice tasks. We are all new at this, but we are not incapable of bringing our students to the level of expertise that they need. Remember what we always say to them, and let it apply to us as well—¡Tú puedes!

### References

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Díaz, José M., Margarita Leicher-Prieto, and Glenn J. Nadelbach. *AP Spanish: Preparing for the Language Examination*. 2nd ed. White Plains, New York: Longman, 1996.

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